

JULY 30, 2007

The American Conservative

Getting Immigration Right

How the Conservative Consensus Tipped

Iraq: Withdraw to Win

Santorum's Enemies List

Religious Right Still Relevant?



BABY BUST

I read with great interest the review of Walter Laqueur's book in which Theodore Dalrymple discusses a subject that appears quite regularly lately: Europeans not having enough children to sustain their societies (June 18). In what appears to be a criticism, Dalrymple states: "They [Europeans] seem to care more about the ozone layer and carbon emissions than they do about the continuation of their own species. Or perhaps bringing up children interferes with what they conceive to be the real business of life: taking lengthy annual holidays in exotic locations and other such pleasures." As a woman of childbearing years and of European extraction, I must take exception with this characterization.

During the 1980s and '90s, the received wisdom here in the West bemoaned the evils of overpopulation. Just as environmental conscientiousness is being touted today as the new religion, the message being sent in decades past was that it was pure selfishness and conceit to procreate. Second-wave feminism also contributed to the decline by devaluing motherhood in an attempt to bolster women's potential in competition with men.

So it is rather ridiculous to criticize those of us who were taught that we were being considerate of the Earth by reducing our family sizes when in fact the real threat is coming from the large families of our enemies in the Muslim world. Let's call a spade a spade: in order to combat the threat of Islam, we need to have more children who will hopefully espouse the democratic values we purport to hold dear, at least for ourselves, although we allow foreigners to carve out their own repressive cultural communities in the name of multiculturalism.

I would dearly love to have more than the two children I already have, but cannot afford to do so and still maintain a rather conservative middle-class standard of living. I wonder just how many children Dalrymple has?

HEIDI SCHMIDT

Via e-mail

ERIC WHO?

James Antle's piece on antiwar Republicans facing primary challenges gives far too much weight to former staffer Eric "Dondero"'s alleged intention to oppose Ron Paul in the primary (July 2). Eric "Dondero" Rittberg is a walking joke. (Why Eric chooses to drop his real last name and use his middle name as his last is a matter of interesting conjecture.)

I know Eric personally. He was an activist and has done some good grassroots work over the years. However, he is also as phony as a bureaucrat's good intentions, a loose cannon who shoots off his mouth at inappropriate times.

His bookshelves are full of libertarian tomes that he has never, to anyone's knowledge, read, quoted, or referenced in any way. His only claim to fame was that Ron took years to get rid of him. Moreover, he has no credibility with the Libertarian Party, not that their concept of credible means much. He has no following, no money, and no ideology other than libertine-ersatz-libertarian war-mongering.

Dr. Paul has been legitimately criticized in the past for making horrible personnel decisions. Nadia Hayes, the 1988 campaign manager who stole hundreds of thousands of dollars but was never charged, and Eric are his two most glaring mistakes.

If you want to investigate a mystery, try to find out why no one in Ron's campaign is paying the slightest bit of attention to the activists in Texas who are championing

at the bit to help the national effort but cannot get a phone call returned from the D.C. office. It seems that even Ron's own organization is subject to the vicissitudes of bureaucracy, which does not bode well for his administration, should he win.

LONNIE BRANTLEY

Via e-mail

UNDERESTIMATING PC

Political correctness is a critical topic, so it's a shame that John Derbyshire bungled it in his July 2 cover story. The problem is that although he does mention that PC is traceable to the communist-backed Frankfurt School, he softens this by a) trying to divide PC into a strong and a weak form and b) making it seem that the weak form evolved due to a need for America to "refine its manners."

The fact is that PC is poison deliberately injected into American life by cultural Marxists. Their specific goal was to debase the family, religion, and country to the point where society breaks down and its members come to hate it. Then according to Marx, this will allow the communists to seize power and begin their march to utopia.

Perhaps the reason Derbyshire can't get a better grip on the true corrosiveness of PC is because he is an atheist. This renders him insensitive to the main thrust of the cultural cancer, namely the killing off of God in the minds and hearts of the people. If cultural Marxists succeed in doing this, all else will fall into place for them.

PETER SKURKISS

Stow, Ohio

The American Conservative welcomes letters to the editor. Submit by e-mail to letters@amconmag.com, by fax to 703-875-3350, or by mail to 1300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 120, Arlington, VA 22209. Please include your name, address, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit all correspondence for space and clarity.

Contents

July 30, 2007 / Vol. 6, No. 15



[COVER]

Getting Immigration Right

BY JOHN O'SULLIVAN It took 15 years, but conservative intellectuals finally deserted the Beltway establishment's open-borders consensus. **Page 6**

[WAR]

The Surge That Failed

BY PAUL ROBINSON Six months of Bush's new strategy hasn't made Iraq safer or more stable. **Page 12**

How to Win in Iraq

BY WILLIAM S. LIND Rapprochement with Iran and neutrality toward Iraq's Shi'ites is the only way America might yet salvage victory. **Page 16**

[IDEAS]

Santorum Against the World

BY MICHAEL BRENDAN DOUGHERTY The former senator abandons the Culture War for global revolution. **Page 21**

COVER ILLUSTRATION: CHRIS HIEBS

COLUMNS

19 Patrick J. Buchanan: The high costs of staying in Iraq—and of leaving

20 Daniel Larison: The Unbearable Lightness of Being Bill Richardson

35 Fred Reed: A Gringo in Paradise

NEWS & VIEWS

4 Fourteen Days: The Lugar Mutiny; Scooter and the Commuter; No Amnesty for John McCain

15 Deep Background: Al-Qaeda's Summer Camp; Acting Against Iran

ARTICLES

11 Stuart Reid: London doesn't need more Churchillians.

23 W. James Antle III: Is the Religious Right still relevant?

25 James Bovard: Gitmo's license to almost kill

ARTS & LETTERS

28 Steve Sailer: Michael Moore's "Sicko"

29 Caleb Stegall: *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future* by Bill McKibben

31 Justin Logan: *The Atomic Bazaar: The Rise of the Nuclear Poor* by William Langewiesche

33 Clark Stooksbury: *The Cult of the Amateur: How Today's Internet is Killing Our Culture* by Andrew Keen

[IRAQ]

BREAKING RANKS

As *TAC* goes to press, the Senate has begun to debate the Iraq War in ways the White House can no longer ignore. Until a month ago, George W. Bush could count on solid Republican support, whatever skepticism existed privately. But then Richard Lugar, ranking Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee, made a speech calling the surge unsustainable. Chuck Hagel and Gordon Smith—heretofore the only vocal antiwar Republicans in the Senate—were no longer alone. Since Lugar, George Voinovich, Pete Domenici, and John Warner have made critical comments, sending the Bush machine into emergency spin mode.

Of course the country would be better off if these senators, and their Democratic counterparts, had recognized that invading Iraq was a bad idea in the first place or acknowledged the mistake before now. But “better late than never” is a cliché for a reason: it’s sensible.

The Bush administration and its allies are now fighting to stave off several resolutions. One calls for active-duty troops to be given reasonable time at home between deployments, which would render Bush’s permanent surge policy impossible. Another would commit to the Iraq Study Group’s recommendations, including diplomatic overtures to the main states in the region and efforts toward Israeli-Palestinian peace, all the while redeploying U.S. troops away from combat missions by next year. Another measure de-authorizes the war by revoking the original 2002 Senate resolution.

All these measures point in a similar direction: toward American departure from Iraq. They recognize there will be no victory, no democratic Iraq as the vanguard of the freedom agenda. Most of all, they allow the United States to begin picking up the pieces of what is surely the biggest strategic blunder in American history.



[NEOCONS]

THE AMNESTY PRESIDENT

President Bush’s commutation of Scooter Libby’s sentence surprised virtually no one. Getting Scooter off the hook has been a major goal of the neoconservatives, and short of starting another war, it’s one of the few ways Bush has of pleasing that part of his base.

But the commutation lays bare a pattern: Bush considers himself and his administration completely above the law. He has turned signing statements into a mainstay of governance, declaring himself exempt from laws on myriad matters. He has carried out wiretaps without legally required court oversight. His most important domestic initiative involved amnesty for illegal immigrants.

The Republican Party, which owes so much of its success in past decades to its law-and-order reputation, should be embarrassed by this president who believes in rule but not law.

[ELECTION]

JOE NEEDS NEW RIDE

Back in April, in an interview on NPR’s “All Things Considered,” Bill Kristol’s enthusiasm for John McCain’s presidential bid momentarily made an honest man of him: “I do think it will be a foreign policy election, that will be

McCain’s claim, that he can lead this country through the wars”—insert nervous chuckle and swift correction—“through the *challenges* that we face.”

Kristol may still get his wars, but McCain won’t get the Republican nomination. *The Weekly Standard* editor once rhapsodized, “Is it too fanciful to speculate about a 2008 ticket of McCain-Lieberman?” Answer: yes. His hawkish dream team may scratch before the first contest. Last month McCain fired 50 staff, cut all employees’ salaries, and reportedly shuttered his entire South Carolina operation. His campaign manager and chief strategist have quit, and second-quarter fundraising filings reveal that Ron Paul has more cash on hand.

Last December, Robert Novak reported that the Republican establishment was coalescing around the former maverick: “It is beginning to look like ‘McCain, Inc.’—that is, party regulars, corporate officials and Washington lawyers and lobbyists moving toward John McCain. ... The GOP, abhorring competition and detesting surprises, likes to establish its presidential nominee well in advance.” But they forgot to ask the base. Conservatives who rallied against the Bush immigration plan have no patience for the senator who lent his name to an amnesty bill. And

as weariness with Iraq grows, the constituency for wider war is increasingly confined to Kristol's supper club.

But that faction will not be easily deterred. With the straight talker sidelined, auditions for Lieberman's running mate will begin right away. Conservative credentials optional. Ability to take direction required. Enemies list—ahem, *challenges*—will be provided.

[COURT] BUS STOP

Last month the Supreme Court took a prudent step by ruling on behalf of a parents group that had challenged the school desegregation plans of Louisville and Seattle. The plans classified children by race in order to determine which schools they could attend, all in pursuit of the holy grail of racial balance. Chief Justice John Roberts wrote for the 5-4 majority that the Court had, in its 1954 landmark *Brown v. Board* ruling, decided children could not be classified by race in order to segregate them and shouldn't begin doing so again for the goal of integrating them.

This milestone ruling should bring closer to an end the increasingly baroque desegregation plans that were drawn up in the '70s. The theory behind them was that black students could only learn in proximity to whites—a notion contradicted by the experience of many excellent all-black schools in the pre-civil rights era.

The reaction to the Court's decision was telling. The entrenched education bureaucracy let out a yowl amidst muttering about the return of Jim Crow. Democratic presidential candidates quickly registered their disapproval. But their complaints seemed muted, nearly *pro forma*. None could really relish the thought of campaigning on behalf of a stepped-up effort to enforce racial balance in the schools using tools like forced busing.

Racial balance is increasingly impossible to achieve anyway. The *Washington Post's* Richard Cohen noted the ruling would have zero impact on big city school systems, which are overwhelmingly non-white and will remain so. David Brooks asked whether integration was even a realistic goal anymore—the kind of question that might have gotten Sam Francis fired ten years ago—and no one raised an eyebrow.

In short, while much can be done to improve schools for all children, assigning students by race and implying that blacks can only learn with whites around are ideas whose time has passed. The sooner educrats learn that, the better.

[CULTURE] GOD SPEAKS LATIN

Fans of high culture: Rejoice! In a landmark document, Pope Benedict XVI lifted all impediments that had been placed on the Latin Mass. This is not only a boon to tradition-minded Catholics but also an opportunity for the culture at large. The ancient liturgy is the source of some of the most beautiful music Christian civilization has produced, from the High Masses composed by Mozart to the solemn plainchant of Gregorian monks. After the Second Vatican Council, the liturgical reform in the Church was caught up in the cultural revolution sweeping across the Western world, leading to "deformations that were hard to bear" according to the Pontiff. Tuneless '70s folk choruses were a poor trade for Mozart.

With this act, Pope Benedict has not only recovered a rich spiritual heritage, he has helped reunite the Church with its artistic legacy. It is a great gift to the Western world that these treasures will no longer be confined to the bargain rack at Borders or concert halls in far-away cities. For this, we can all say *Deo Gratias*. ■

The American Conservative

Publisher
Ron Unz

Editor
Scott McConnell

Executive Editor
Kara Hopkins

Assistant Editors
Michael Brendan Dougherty
Richard Spencer

Film Critic
Steve Sailer

Contributing Editors

W. James Antle III, Andrew J. Bacevich, Doug Bandow, James Bovard, Michael Desch, Philip Giraldi, Paul Gottfried, Leon Hadar, Peter Hitchens, Daniel Larison, Christopher Layne, Eric S. Margolis, Daniel McCarthy, James P. Pinkerton, Justin Raimondo, Fred Reed, R.J. Stove, Thomas E. Woods Jr., John Zmirak

Art Director
Mark Graef

Associate Publisher
Jon Basil Utley

Publishing Consultant
Ronald E. Burr

Office Manager
Petra Blondiaux

Copy Assistant
John W. Greene

Founding Editors
Patrick J. Buchanan
Taki Theodoracopulos

The American Conservative, Vol. 6, No. 15, July 30, 2007 (ISSN 1540-966X). Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. TAC is published 24 times per year, biweekly (except for January and August) for \$49.97 per year by The American Conservative, LLC, 1300 Wilson Blvd., Suite 120, Arlington, VA, 22209. Periodicals postage paid at Arlington, VA, and additional mailing offices. Printed in the United States of America. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 9030, Maple Shade, NJ 08052-9030.

Subscription rates: \$49.97 per year (24 issues) in the U.S., \$54.97 in Canada (U.S. funds), and \$89.97 other foreign, via airmail. Back issues: \$6.00 (prepaid) per copy in USA, \$7.00 in Canada (U.S. funds).

For subscription orders, payments, and other subscription inquiries —

By phone: **800-579-6148**
(outside the U.S./Canada 856-380-4131)

Via Web: www.amconmag.com

By mail: *The American Conservative*, P.O. Box 9030, Maple Shade, NJ 08052-9030

When ordering a subscription please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your first issue.

Inquiries and letters to the editor should be sent to letters@amconmag.com. For advertising sales or editorial call 703-875-7600.

This issue went to press on July 12, 2007.
Copyright 2007 *The American Conservative*.

[the know-something party]

Getting Immigration Right

How conservatives blocked the open-borders establishment

By John O'Sullivan

IN SUMMER 1991, beginning a long air trip on a National Review Institute delegation to the Far East, I opened a 14,000-word submission to *National Review* and settled down to read. My mood was a good deal more optimistic than it usually was toward 14,000-word submissions. Its author was a friend and gifted writer, Peter Brimelow, then a senior editor at *Forbes*, who had long wanted to write this piece. But was the topic “hot” enough to command as much as 20 pages in a national magazine?

I was soon blown away by one of the most powerful and lively polemics I have ever read. It was comprehensive, too, covering almost every aspect of immigration and its effects in crisp and well-documented sections.

My traveling companions included Bill and Priscilla Buckley. Bill had given me full editorial control of *NR* at this point, but you don't devote a magazine's entire article section to one piece without informing the proprietor. I gave him the manuscript and told him my intentions. He raised a skeptical eyebrow, but proceeded to read.

An hour later Bill walked over, full of enthusiasm for the piece. Priscilla confirmed our judgment. Peter's magnum opus appeared as “Time to Re-Think Immigration” behind a cover of the Statue of Liberty raising her hand not to lift a torch aloft but to forbid entry.

As xenophobes later explained it,

Peter Brimelow, an English immigrant, and *National Review*, a magazine then edited by an English immigrant, had launched the modern American debate on immigration. But then, as the former occasionally quipped, aren't immigrants supposed to do the dirty jobs that Americans won't?

In fact, this particular immigrant had needed converting. For almost three years, I had argued that immigration was the wrong issue on which to hang the wider cause of protecting America's national identity against bilingualism, multiculturalism, and postmodern deconstruction (the so-called “National Question”). Just before the 1988 election, I had been astonished at a conservative conference in California when a long burst of applause unexpectedly greeted my mild criticism of the slowly developing spread of biculturalism. Knowing the damage that biculturalism had done to Canada—and sensing from the audience reaction that they were anxious on the same score—I judged that language would be the best horse from that stable. “Official English” enjoyed an 80/20 advantage in opinion polls, it had won the few referenda that the political class had been unable to prevent, and it had none of the “Ellis Island” drawbacks attending the immigration issue—few Americans resented their immigrant grandparents' having to learn English.

But I changed my mind under two influences.

First, I realized that unchecked immigration was fuelling the support for bilingualism and multiculturalism. Not usually directly, as most immigrants intended to learn English and become Americans. Initially, it was Americans who were mainly responsible for cultural balkanization—elite Americans because they believed in a multicultural America and enforced its strictures in both public and private sectors and ordinary Americans because, being tolerant people, they thought it was only reasonable to make the newcomers, once here, feel at home. Immigration made multiculturalism seem reasonable. And the larger the immigrant intake, the more such reforms as bilingual education seemed simply necessary. As well as making these developments seem reasonable, unchecked immigration ensured that a steady supply of new and probably loyal recruits for the new politics of multiculturalism would keep coming.

Even establishment Republicans, who didn't notice much, noticed this. By the early 1990s, the GOP was backing away from its earlier sympathy for official English and even from its longer opposition to racial preferences. State parties and governors now began to oppose referenda that would go on to overturn preferences or bilingual education by large majorities. They were

responding to what they saw as the political market of the future.

My second reason for second thoughts was economic. Both Brimelow and, through him, George Borjas, a respected economist specializing in immigration (and a Cuban immigrant himself), had drawn my attention to the economic effects of immigration. Its impact on native-born Americans as a whole was modest, and it actually imposed serious economic costs on the low-paid. So there was a strong case against unchecked immigration on both cultural and economic grounds. I gradually swung round to regarding immigration as the primary “National Question” and read Brimelow’s article from that sympathetic standpoint.

The piece created a mini-sensation in the world of intellectual conservatism. But it was largely a favorable one. Even those conservatives who dissented from its restrictionist conclusions, such as historian Gertrude Himmelfarb, conceded that it had mounted a powerful case. It made waves outside conservatism, too. Random House—a mainstream publisher but one then headed by another English immigrant, Harry Evans, a journalist to his fingertips who preferred controversy to pieties—commissioned a book based on it. But reviews for the book on publication in 1995 were far harsher than reactions to the article. There were exceptions: Nathan Glazer, for instance, from a neoconservative standpoint, recognized generously that *Alien Nation* was a strong and original contribution to immigration literature. In general, however, neoconservatives, libertarians, and establishment Republicans were hostile; liberals were poisonous; conservatives were divided.

What caused this change was that conservative immigration reform had become a political possibility. In retrospect, the years from 1995 to 1997 were the false dawn of immigration reform.

Such episodes are natural in the evolution of political controversy. A new issue crystallizing popular discontents emerges. For a while it sweeps all before it. Then its opponents rally and block its advance. But if the sentiments it musters are deep-seated, it re-emerges. Goldwater and Nixon were in very different ways false dawns of the Reagan revolution; ditto Edward Heath and Thatcherism in Britain. With a serious political conflict now in the offing, even conservative supporters of the immigration status quo took off the gloves. Things went as follows:

1. On April 19, 1995, *Alien Nation* was published and Timothy McVeigh blew up the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. That was the kind of timing all authors fear. McVeigh sucked up all available political publicity for several weeks, and, understandably enough, halted the book’s rise on the bestseller lists. McVeigh also had a more damaging effect on the immigration debate: he became the poster boy for a dark vision of America in which the villains were not any kind of aliens but “Us.” To be concerned about immigration, especially to write of an alien nation, suddenly seemed sinister to the media. But ...

2. In June 1995, the bipartisan Jordan Commission, appointed by Congress and headed by the respected former congresswoman Barbara Jordan, issued one of its several reports recommending reforms of the U.S. immigration system, including a reduction in legal numbers by about one-third (to 550,000 legal visas annually), changes in provisions for “family re-unification” to prevent chain migration, improved border security, employer sanctions, and easier procedures for deportation. (The year before, in the November 1994 elections, not only had Gov. Pete Wilson won a hotly contested re-election in California on a pro-

gram that included calls for better control of immigration, but also Proposition 187, which barred illegal immigrants from using non-emergency public services, had passed with a comfortable majority.) The wind was behind the sails of immigration reform. Jordan was warmly received when she outlined her committee’s proposals to Congress. And ...

3. On June 8, 1995, President Clinton announced that the Jordan proposals were “consistent with my own views” and a “road map for the Congress to consider.” Since Congress had become Republican the previous year and the House was even then pushing through a “conservative revolution,” passing a satisfactory immigration bill should have been a no-brainer. Alas ...

4. In January 1996, Barbara Jordan succumbed to cancer. Her death removed a strong and respected voice for immigration reform—and one hard to accuse of racism. Next ...

5. Clinton who had been proclaiming his fidelity to the Jordan proposals as late as February 1996, suddenly reversed course. In March, the administration told Congress that it opposed changes in legal immigration, especially the proposed reduction in family members allowed to join relatives in America. Why? According to a 1997 article in the *Boston Globe*, Democratic National Committee vice chairman and fundraiser John Huang urged Clinton to reverse his endorsement of the Jordan Commission proposal to disallow automatic entry for adult siblings of U.S. citizens. Many Asian immigrants sponsor their adult brothers and sisters once they become citizens. And Clinton was at that time hoovering up campaign contributions from Asians, Asian-Americans, and—a novel touch—even Asian intelligence agencies. Furthermore...

6. In congressional debate throughout 1996, the immigration-reform bill was stripped of its major provisions by a

coalition of the White House, the majority of Democrats, and a minority of Republicans. (Sound familiar?) And with the 1996 campaign in full swing, the Clinton administration's interest in it switched to the question of how many immigrants could vote. All of them, decided Al Gore, who placed his people in the Citizenship USA program to ensure a massive citizen enrollment. An estimated 18,000 criminals were duly granted citizenship in time to vote. Gore's intervention eventually became a scandal, but only after the election had changed many things. Among them...

7. In January 1997, Sen. Spencer Abraham—a leader of those Republican senators who favored more or less open immigration—replaced moderate restrictionist Alan Simpson as the chair of the Senate immigration subcommittee. In February, he visited Silicon Valley to reassure the assembled whiz kids that there would be no further restrictions on legal immigration on his watch. Suddenly, however...

8. In summer 1997, there was a brief rallying of reformers when the National Academy of Sciences released a report on immigration that confirmed all the main economic conclusions of Borjas and Brimelow. No great economic gains were claimed for it, and large fiscal costs were cited. This was such a defeat for the immiphiliacs that the *New York Times* was compelled to report it under the misleading headline: "ACADEMY'S REPORT SAYS IMMIGRATION BENEFITS THE U.S.—no huge costs are cited." Yet even though the report was an important victory for immigration reformers, undermining the intellectual self-satisfaction of their opponents, it came too late. Other matters were gripping the political imagination in the Age of Clinton. And on Aug. 22, 1997, in his "Potomac Watch" column in the *Wall Street Journal*, Paul Gigot assessed the final result with complacent assurance: "... the crusade by a few

columnists and British expatriates to turn the GOP into an anti-immigrant party seems to have failed. Immigrant-bashing has proven to be lousy American politics. When even California conservatives admit this, the debate should be over."

Gigot was expressing what was by then the bipartisan elite orthodoxy on immigration. Whereas the various elites that make up the establishment had been divided about immigration—and so open to argument and debate—as late as 1995, they had coalesced around strong support for it by the middle of 1997. A number of social trends, some of which are evident in the above list of events—the need of some corporations and Republican donors for cheap labor, the need of Democrats for cheap votes, the need of labor unions for new recruits, the need of churches and charities for new cases, the need of the media for new narratives of American bigotry, and the continued advance of "victimhood" and "diversity" as concepts explaining American history and society—came together and hardened into a new orthodoxy. It remained the bipartisan elite orthodoxy for the next—well, until last month.

But this was an orthodoxy with weak foundations. It represented the political interests of Democrats much more faithfully than those of Republicans, even if the latter were slow to realize the fact. It ran counter to the instincts of the voters, even if they, too, were slow to realize the fact. And it was chock full of discrepancies, contradictions, fallacies, and simple errors. Consider some of its articles of faith:

Immigrants are necessary to service our growing economy and especially to bail out the Social Security system. Japan enjoyed one of the highest economic growth rates in the world for 35 years with no immigration whatsoever. Since the existence of a thing is absolute proof of its possibility (as Bertrand

Russell once pointed out), this demonstrates that a growing economy is possible without immigration. The trick is achieved by a combination of investment and innovation. Current immigration policy—with its emphasis on bringing in unskilled workers and relatives of recent immigrants—discourages both. It distorts as much as it feeds the economy. It ensures that America is a more unskilled and less automated economy, and a more stratified society, than would be the case with lower levels and different types of immigration. As for Social Security, that argument is a Ponzi scheme and, like all such schemes, would require an ever-expanding arrival of new contributors. After a few generations, this ingenious fiscal policy would run out of human immigrants and the U.S. would have to import aliens from outer space to continue financing its vast entitlement programs now accommodating most of the world.

It is essential to legalize illegals and to liberalize legal immigration to win over the growing Hispanic vote. This began a series of arguments addressed to nervous Republicans. It was easily demolished. Since Hispanics currently vote Democrat by roughly a two-to-one margin, admitting more Hispanic immigrants to residence and citizenship would add millions more votes overall to the Democrat column. Hispanics already here favor less restrictive immigration only marginally more than other Americans, and those Hispanics who lean Republican tend to favor more restrictive immigration. Republicans, though, were determined to look on the bright side.

Remember how Gov. Pete Wilson destroyed the Californian GOP by opposing immigration. This argument—to which Gigot refers—is a brilliant device to transform a weakness of the orthodoxy into its strongest point. The weakness in question is that the electoral decline of the California GOP

can be plainly traced to demographic change driven by immigration. It is therefore a warning of how unchecked immigration could make the national GOP a minority party. What the Gigot argument does is redirect responsibility for the party's decline to Wilson's successful 1994 re-election campaign in which he campaigned for better federal control of immigration. Unfortunately for this claim, Wilson came from behind to win a near-landslide victory in part on this issue. (Proposition 187 also passed handsomely.) It was subsequent Republican candidates who lost heavily—but they had quietly disavowed Wilson and avoided immigration as an issue. To blame Wilson for their defeats is to indulge in magical thinking. That many Republicans did just that testifies to the power of orthodoxy in politics.

THESE REBELLIONS HAVE ALERTED REPUBLICANS IN CONGRESS TO BOTH THE RISKS OF IGNORING POPULAR SENTIMENTS AND THE POTENTIAL REWARDS OF LISTENING TO THE VOTERS.

Despite its difficulties, George W. Bush embraced this orthodoxy both as a candidate and as president. Indeed, he was more open and went further than most Republicans. For instance, he made it clear that he admired the enterprise of most illegal immigrants and would try to help their families join them in the United States. Most Americans paid little attention to these declarations since other issues were more prominent. Democrats agreed with the president, and the media covered them both favorably and on the inside pages, if at all. In other words, the elite orthodoxy had the effect of ensuring that immigration, illegal and legal, never became a political issue from 1997 to about 2006. Bush's two elections seemed to confirm it.

Why did this apparent national consensus break down so spectacularly in

2006 and 2007? There are three explanations. Not surprisingly, the elite explanation is the least plausible: namely, that our system is broken. If our system had been less partisan, the argument goes, it would have passed a necessary measure that most Americans wanted. This is the opposite of the truth. In reality, a bipartisan elite tried to force a measure that most Americans opposed into law but were defeated by senators who heeded strong and widespread protests. In sum: our system worked.

The second explanation, advanced by Brimelow, is that ordinary Americans—in particular, grassroots Republicans—have been staging more and more rebellions against the elite consensus: the near-defeat of Utah Republican immiphiliac Chris Cannon in a primary; the clear victory of immigration reformer Brian

Bilbray over a pro-immigration Democrat in the hard environment of Duke Cunningham's former district; the astounding defeat of Republican football hero Tom Osborne for the Nebraska governorship solely over his support for in-state college tuition for illegal immigrants; the replacement of the mayor and five councilors in Herndon, Virginia by rebels running against their sponsorship of an official day-laborer site for illegals; the calls by state GOP conventions in Washington and Texas (yes, Texas!) for the removal of automatic citizenship for the children of illegal immigrants; etc., etc.

These rebellions have alerted Republicans in Congress to both the risks of ignoring popular sentiments and the potential rewards of listening to the voters. Hence, in the debates of 2006 and 2007, two-thirds or more of the Republi-

cans in the Senate and a larger percentage of House members rejected the so-called bipartisan bills. Even before Congress showed its hand, the wider conservative intellectual community had been gradually shifting away from elite orthodoxy. In the most recent debate, a list of conservative intellectuals who opposed it on principle included Thomas Sowell, Roger Kimball, and Robert Bork.

They, too, had been liberated—in part by the insurgencies Brimelow lists, in part by the most distinguished intellectual rebellion on these issues in recent years. This was Samuel Huntington's book, *Who Are We?* exploring the deconstruction of American identity by bilingualism, multiculturalism, and mass immigration. There was an attempt by various academic and multicultural bully-boys to crush Huntington and his thesis with the usual slurs of racism and nativism. But this failed when a list of undeniably distinguished scholars rode gallantly (since some disagreed with him) to his defense. Following that, the topics raised by Huntington became respectable and common fare for such outlets as *City Journal* and even *The Weekly Standard*. [A personal note may be in order here: I do not include *National Review* in this company since the magazine has been strongly in favor of conservative immigration reform since 1992. Contrary to some mythology on this topic, I remain on the magazine's masthead, I write regularly for it (on immigration among other topics), and I am perfectly content with how it has handled immigration since 1997. In particular, both the magazine and the website played an indispensable role in the defeat of the 2006 and 2007 immigration bills.]

Brimelow's thesis of a spreading popular rebellion is accordingly an important part of the truth. But does it account for the scale of the defeat suffered by Bush and the bipartisan establishment? Surely we might still be living under a national consensus for doing nothing about

immigration if some third factor had not intervened? So what is the X-factor?

According to Steve Sailer's explanation, George W. Bush is the X-factor. He brought about the collapse of the elite consensus on immigration because he insisted on repeatedly raising the subject. Suppose he had simply kept quiet. Simply ignoring illegal immigration *inter alia* would have enabled Republican donors to continue getting cheap labor while denying Democrats the prospect of cheap votes. Most presidents, especially if they were embroiled in a war crisis, would have acted on that cynical logic. But Bush believes that he has both a moral duty and good economic reasons to reform immigration along the "comprehensive" lines of the proposed bill. And by getting together with the Democrats on two occasions to pass such a bill, he maximized the rebellion of Middle America against both it and him.

BUSH'S RATINGS FALL IN LOCKSTEP WITH HIS ADVOCACY OF LIBERAL IMMIGRATION REFORM WITH ALMOST UNCANNY TIMING.

Most conservative voters were reluctant to believe that a president they liked could possibly support a policy they detested. His expressions of support for legalizing illegals initially confused them. But the more he embraced amnesty, the more he persuaded supporters he was serious, and the more they abandoned him. Bush's ratings fall in lockstep with his advocacy of liberal immigration reform with almost uncanny timing. Republicans could now look at the actual bill more critically.

That was dangerous. Because the Bush-Kennedy bill was written largely by Democrats and immigration lawyers, it was riddled with items that Republicans disliked. So it was not difficult for researchers, such as Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation, to show that granting 12 or more million low-paid people

the right to welfare benefits would impose vast costs on U.S. taxpayers. To get such a costly measure through, advocates had to create a sense of crisis about the existing situation of 12 million illegals. But those shouting "crisis" were in charge of immigration control while the number of illegals doubled. They had gone from complacency to panic in a single bound. It did not increase confidence in their advice. At the same time, the sense of crisis they created gave greater credibility to such alternative "enforcement first" measures as protecting border security, employer sanctions, and making deportation easier.

Advocates of the legislation as different as Sen. John McCain and think-tanker Tamar Jacoby were now trapped in a logical dilemma. On the one hand, they had to dismiss these alternatives to the bill as either unrealistic or barbaric; on the other, they had to assure

doubters that these same measures in the bill would work fine and acceptably once the bill had been passed. By the end of the debates, the establishment experts were looking as confused and self-contradictory as the Bush-Kennedy bill itself. It was the leaders of the opposition—Senators Sessions and DeMint in particular—who seemed in command of the facts as well as the situation.

The legislation might still have survived if we had been living in the world of 1997. By 2006, however, the alternative media of talk radio and bloggers had been flourishing for several years. These broke stories, analyzed legislative contradictions, corrected erroneous media accounts, aroused opponents nationally, and in general organized opposition to the bill. Taken together, new media as politically different as Rush Limbaugh,

Mickey Kaus, and *NRO* stalled the rapid progress that was essential for the bill's passage. They revealed its defects. And they established that the bill's bipartisanship was a fraud since the overwhelming majority of the GOP outside the Senate opposed it.

That peeled off a final layer of the bill's conservative support. Bill Kristol, representing many neoconservatives disposed to favor the bill, came out against it. He did so in part because it had serious drafting defects but, more importantly, because it was creating a bitter gulf between rank-and-file Republicans and the party leadership. That in turn was imperiling Republican objectives in other areas, notably Iraq.

The bill failed, and it is unlikely to be revived until after the 2008 election. Some brand of immigration reform, however, there will have to be eventually. McCain in defeat giped that opponents of the bill were purely negative and had no "solution" of their own. No shame attaches, of course, to being negative if the proposal under consideration will make matters worse, as McCain's policy would have done. Yet as it happens, there are many sensible conservative proposals on the table. My own would be to revive those in the Jordan Commission of 1995. They are not ideal, but they are a sensible improvement on the status quo.

Until the battle recommences, however, if any indignant xenophobe is thinking of writing an exposé of this conspiracy of English immigrants to impose an "un-American" system of immigration law on the American people, Steve Sailer has already come up with the perfect title: "The Protocols of the Elders of Albion." ■

John O'Sullivan is a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and author of The President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister: Three Who Changed the World.

The Doctors' Plot

Britain keeps cool after the Iraq War spills over.

By Stuart Reid

LONDON—It's best when the bomb doesn't go off. That way you get all the excitement of war without any of the boring stuff, like bodies, orphans, widows, and universal misery. The three botched attacks of a fortnight ago—two in London's West End, one at the Glasgow airport—were noisily seized upon by the Churchillians in our midst to drive home the old story: never in the field of human conflict, except perhaps briefly in 1940, has this nation faced a more deadly enemy. This time, however, to make matters even better, there was evidence of an international Islamist conspiracy in the soft underbelly of socialist Britain. Seven of the eight suspects were immigrant doctors employed by the NHS, and one was a health worker. If Saddam Hussein was the new Hitler, then these guys were the new Josef Mengeles.

Not everything the Churchillians say is wrong, of course. We do face a ruthless (if incompetent) enemy, and there was and is a conspiracy. The security alert at the beginning of July illustrated, among other things, the desperate recruiting problems of our health service and the lax procedures of our immigration people. But much has changed since the Tube bombings of July 7, 2005, in which 52 people were killed, and the Churchillians are having to adjust to the new realities. The old line that terrorist attacks have nothing to do with Iraq—once Tony Blair's favorite riff—doesn't cut it any more, not least because the Intelligence and Security Committee report on 7/7 found that "Iraq continues to act as a motivation and focus for terrorist activity in the UK." So there is a

new line: the latest attacks show once and for all that the departure of Tony Blair was never going to rid Britain of the terrorist threat. That's true, of course, but it tells us nothing about the national debate. No one ever thought, far less said, that the departure of the poodle would bring peace in our time.

But the most imposing new reality facing the Churchillians, and the rest of us, is the new prime minister. The attempted car bombings came on Day Two of Gordon Brown's premiership, and he played the situation brilliantly—by the simple expedient of not being Tony Blair. He avoided the camp, steely-eyed rhetoric Blair employed on these occasions and called for calm resolution. His approach was so laid back that he slept through the first bomb alert because the night watchman at No. 10 decided not to wake him. Why bother? It was 2 a.m. and the police seemed to have everything under control.

More to the point, though, Brown pointedly abandoned all talk of the war on terror. As far as Her Majesty's Government is concerned, terrorists are now criminals, not warriors. The new prime minister will not abandon the United States, of course, but neither will he cling to it with the almost sexual passion of Blair. There will be no more standing shoulder to shoulder with George W. Bush, no more dancing cheek to cheek.

Dropping "war on terror" was a good (and popular) move, but what followed wasn't: a couple of days into the security alert, Brown decreed that henceforth the Union Jack would fly from public buildings at all times. The thinking was apparently that flying the flag would bind the

nation in patriotic fervor and help us to confound our enemies. But Brown, an unsubtle Scot, does not really understand the nuances of British nationality. We are not now a nation of flag fliers. These days the old symbols of nationhood count for very little. Our famously unarmed police now routinely carry arms. In Westminster, they patrol in pairs, in body armor, with Heckler and Koch MP5 carbines and Glock 17 pistols. There are surveillance cameras everywhere, too, and we now have a sliding scale of terror alerts, published daily on a dedicated website. (You begin to wonder how we got through the Blitz.) Immediately after the botched attacks, the level was raised to "critical," meaning that we should expect a deadly attack at any moment; within four days it had dropped to "severe," meaning that an attack was highly likely. But the only hyperventilating was in the newspapers, and on the evening of July 5, a "severe" day, Brown walked the quarter mile from Downing Street to Birdcage Walk to attend the *Spectator* summer party.

In Glasgow, too, the mood had been pretty matter-of-fact. Police Constable Stewart Ferguson was on duty at the airport when the Jeep Cherokee careened into the passenger terminal, and the driver burst into flames. He later described his reactions: "It struck me when the second male came towards me on fire that this was something different, something out of the ordinary..."

All the same, some poor copper—some future PC Ferguson—will sooner or later have his head blown off by one of these madmen, and we'll have no warn-

ing of the attack. A little more realism in the face of the threat might help, however. Jacqui Smith, the agreeable new home secretary, has said that it is “unacceptable to hold any one community responsible” for the latest attacks, and you can see why: we live in a multicultural society, and it would be insane to offend entire communities. Yet the fact is that those who would murder and maim us seek to do so in the name of Allah. You don’t have to be a member of the racist community or a believer in Eurabia to see that we have a problem with Muslim immigration. There are as many as two million Muslims in Britain, about half of them in London. The majority are law-abiding and peaceful (and some are excellent doctors). But they have been alienated by the war in Iraq and often carry a lot of conspiracy baggage. According to one poll, a quarter of British Muslims believe that the 7/7 bombings were carried out by MI5. Other polls come up with equally alarming findings: 30 percent of all Muslims here do not consider themselves British, apparently, and 37 percent of young Muslims would rather live under Sharia than British law.

According to Admiral Sir Alan West, Britain’s new security minister, it could be 15 years before we overcome terrorism at home. But we shall overcome it. That’s the point. There is no chance that Britain in particular or the West in general will succumb to Islam. Al-Qaeda presents no long-term threat. But there are other threats. The West End attacks occurred on the day that “Hostel II,” the hip “torture porn” movie, opened in London. Is it not just possible that in the longer term, the “ironic” filth and cruelty of “Hostel II” will prove more harmful to the fabric of society—though not of course to life and limb—than anything that is even now being cooked up in a bedsit in Leeds? ■

Stuart Reid is deputy editor of the London Spectator.

[autopsy in progress]

The Surge That Failed

Iraq still lacks conditions for peace. More troops don’t change that.

By Paul Robinson

“HOW WAS IT,” asked Leo Tolstoy in *War and Peace*, that the Russian army “did not achieve its purpose when it had surrounded the French on three sides and its intention was to capture them?” The answer, according to Tolstoy, was that “the aim of cutting off Napoleon and his army never existed except in the imagination of some dozen individuals. It could not have existed because it was absurd and impracticable.”

Today we have our own version of an absurd and impracticable plan—the surge in Iraq—and again only a dozen or so individuals, concentrated in the White House and the corridors of the American Enterprise Institute, seem to believe that it can succeed. Among them are William Kristol and Frederick Kagan.

In the June 26 issue of *The Weekly Standard*, they comment that “real progress has already been made in the war against Al Qaeda in Iraq, and the terrorists know it. That’s why they’re surging against our surge.” A few weeks earlier, another true believer, Charles Krauthammer, argued that a temporary reduction in violence in Iraq (since reversed) was also evidence that the surge was working. In the rose-tinted world of the neoconservative revolutionaries, if violence goes up, the surge is succeeding; if it goes down, that is also a sign that the surge is succeeding. Back on Planet Earth, the general opin-

ion appears to be that the situation has stayed about the same: better in some places, worse in others. But no doubt more of the same is evidence of progress to the neocons as well.

The war’s supporters have long been arguing that the insurgency is in its “last throes.” At present, much is being made of an alleged alliance between American forces and Sunni tribes in Anbar province against al-Qaeda in Iraq. The Anbar Sunnis have decisively turned against AQI, we are told. Unfortunately we have heard this many times in the past, yet AQI still survives.

In October 2004, for instance, the *Washington Post* reported, “Local insurgents in the city of Fallujah are turning against the foreign fighters who have been their allies in the rebellion that has held the U.S. military at bay in parts of Iraq’s Sunni Muslim heartland.” In August 2005, the same newspaper then reported, “Rising up against insurgent leader Abu Musab Zarqawi, Iraqi Sunni Muslims in Ramadi fought with grenade launchers and automatic weapons Saturday to defend their Shiite neighbors against a bid to drive them from the western city. ... The fighting in Ramadi suggested a potentially serious threat to Zarqawi’s group, al Qaeda in Iraq.” Again, in September 2005, a statement by the Sunni Association of Muslim Scholars denouncing the tactics of AQI was met with the assertion that it “repre-

sents compelling evidence of a real break between mainstream Sunni Iraqis and fringe Salafist extremists.” And then in March 2006, *USA Today* stepped in to declare that “there were signs in parts of Iraq that local Sunni leaders and their militias were rising up against foreign fighters.” Despite all this, like weeds in a garden, AQI keeps popping up again, and U.S.-Sunni deals notwithstanding, it will continue to do so. The environment suits it too well.

Tolstoy, a veteran of the siege of Sevastopol and experienced in matters of war, felt that a great general was one like Marshal Kutuzov who “knows that there is something stronger and more important than his own will—the inevitable march of events—and has the brains to see them and grasp their significance.” One does not have to share Tolstoy’s historical determinism to see that there is something to what he says. Putting his ideas in a slightly different context, something called “ripeness theory” is currently in vogue in academic studies of conflict termination. The theory suggests that even the most competent general, with the strongest will, executing the best strategy for conflict resolution in the most efficient manner, will not succeed if the conditions for peace do not already exist, unless, in other words, the time is ripe.

Ripeness, according to the guru of the theory, I. William Zartmann, exists when a conflict reaches a “mutually hurting stalemate,” in which both sides understand they cannot escape by means of escalation, and when there is also a “mutually perceived way out,” whereby both sides believe that a negotiated solution is possible and can envisage the rough outlines of what it might be. Unfortunately, all too often, even when an outside observer might consider that these conditions exist in some objective sense, the competing parties themselves fail to perceive this. Emotional considerations such as fear, anger, and a desire

for revenge cloud their judgement.

The key questions, therefore, are whether there exist in Iraq a mutually hurting stalemate and perceived way out, whether the combatants are emotionally capable of seeing such a path even if it exists, and whether the surge has made things any ripier than they were before. The answer to all of these questions is clearly “no.” The Shia and the Kurds are on top, not stalemated, and they see no reason to surrender their positions. Moreover, both Sunni and Shia insurgents clearly believe that the will of the United States is weak and that they can push the occupation forces out of the country if they continue the struggle. Meanwhile, it is not at all obvious what the outlines of any mutually perceived way out might be. Ripeness is clearly absent.

tique of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Vietnam War, Lt. Col. John Nagl, author of a comparative study of British and American counterinsurgency practices in Malaysia and Vietnam, and an Australian lieutenant colonel, David Kilcullen, author of a doctoral thesis and various articles on counterinsurgency theory and practice. All recite the same mantra: politics matter more than military action. Thus Petraeus has repeatedly stated that the solution to Iraq’s problems is political, not military. Similarly, according to Nagl, “the establishment of a legitimate, functioning government is the surest means to fostering a lasting peace.” Success in Iraq, he claims, demands “national-level reconciliation between the Sunnis and the Shia.” And Kilcullen has said that “the best counterinsurgency techniques ...

EVEN THE MOST COMPETENT GENERAL, WITH THE STRONGEST WILL, EXECUTING THE BEST STRATEGY FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE MOST EFFICIENT MANNER, WILL NOT SUCCEED IF THE CONDITIONS FOR PEACE DO NOT ALREADY EXIST.

Now the process of ripening can be speeded up, and one may imagine the surge as a form of horticulture designed to do just that. In this regard, it is important to note what those in charge of executing the operation have to say about counterinsurgency strategy and how the fruit of peace can be brought to maturity: not, they universally say, by destroying the insurgents but by creating a sufficient degree of temporary calm to enable all competing factions to perceive a mutually agreeable way out. Watering the plants is more likely to succeed than ripping off their leaves.

The head gardener in this case is Gen. David Petraeus. Backing him up is his so-called “brains trust,” consisting of such green-thumbed men as Col. Herbert McMaster, author of a devastating cri-

ttacked insurgency through unified military, intelligence, political, socioeconomic, ‘hearts and minds,’ and security measures.” This thinking has now become formal doctrine with the issuance of the Army’s new field manual on counterinsurgency, “FM 3-24,” which notes that “political factors have primacy in counterinsurgency. ... resolving most insurgencies requires a political solution.”

This isn’t especially novel stuff, but Counterinsurgency 101, a modern-day update of what the British and French experts Robert Thompson and David Galula wrote in the 1960s. Undergraduates taking strategic studies at any half-decent university could have told the Pentagon most of this years ago. Nevertheless, it makes clear that the success

of the surge has to be measured not in military but in political terms. Indeed, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has admitted that the purpose of the strategy is political. The idea is that Iraqi leaders will not be willing or able to work out a settlement to end the crisis in their country if the capital remains in chaos, but if a semblance of order can be created, emotions might cool sufficiently for them to be able to do so. Cut back the undergrowth and perhaps enough sunshine may reach the struggling new shoots of politics to give them a chance to develop.

Sadly for Gates, the political situation has become worse, not better, since the surge began. The United States has set four benchmarks for progress. These are voiced in proposed legislation to share Iraq's oil wealth between regions, allow more former Ba'ath Party members to take up government positions (a neat sequel to de-Ba'athification!), allow local elections to be held, and amend the constitution. Yet a recent Pentagon report commented that "Iraqi delivery on these commitments has been uneven." "Frankly," says Gates, "we are disappointed with the progress so far." Indeed, the Iraqi parliament's immediate response to the surge was to take a two-month recess and plan another for August. Even at the best of times, the parliament has difficulty in obtaining a quorum, and now that 30 MPs who support Moqtada al-Sadr have announced that they will boycott sittings, it will find it even more difficult, if not impossible. The likelihood of the desired legislation seeing the light of day is slight.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi government is losing what little authority it ever had. Iraqi legislators interviewed by *USA Today* in late May told the newspaper that Prime Minister al-Maliki is "weak," his government is "more or less paralyzed," "not competent," "hasn't delivered and is not capable of doing the job."

Sunni MPs are trying to form a new bloc to topple the government, while the Sadrist have abandoned parliament altogether. At the same time, Sadr himself has emerged from hiding to renew calls for an end to the occupation. In June, his Mahdi Army clashed with the British in Amarah and with Iraqi security forces in Nasiriyah. A senior British officer in Basra assessed in mid-June that the leadership of the Mahdi Army "has made a conscious decision to rejoin the fight."

While the surge focuses on bringing the Sunnis into the political fold, the Shia are slipping out of it. As the *New York Times* reported on June 22, "violence is convulsing" the previously quiet Shi'ite city of Diwaniya in southern Iraq. The violence, says the newspaper, "reflects the emergence of a poisonous

percent lower than in June 2006, and oil production also fell in the same period. Even by the most generous estimates, the rate of unemployment remains around 30 percent. In all of these areas, the surge is entirely irrelevant.

Here we confront the fundamental weakness of the American position in Iraq. While military power rests in the hands of the United States, political sovereignty belongs to the Iraqis. This situation conflicts entirely with a basic premise of counter-insurgency theory, namely the unity of military and political command. As David Kilcullen notes, "control of all counter-insurgent actions (political, military, social and economic) in the hands of a single 'Supremo' is recognized as a key element. ... But to achieve this level of integration requires

MILITARY POWER RESTS IN THE HANDS OF THE UNITED STATES, POLITICAL SOVEREIGNTY BELONGS TO THE IRAQIS. THIS CONFLICTS WITH A BASIC PREMISE OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY THEORY: UNITY OF MILITARY AND POLITICAL COMMAND.

political landscape in which competing Shiite groups no longer look to the political system to allocate power. The government's authority appears to have broken down."

In any event, the U.S. plan rests on a rather naïve trust in the power of paperwork. Even if the desired laws are passed, little may change, for legislation is meaningless if not transformed into action at the local level—and the Iraqi state lacks the capacity to do this. According to *Foreign Policy*'s "Failed State Index," in the past year, it has fallen from the fourth most incapable state in the world to second most incapable, beaten only by Sudan. Almost nothing has been done to end corruption, institute competent governance, or promote economic and social prosperity. National electricity output in June 2007 sunk to 8

excellent government stability, unity and restraint." This is impossible in Iraq. Not only is it the case that all actions cannot be unified in a single set of hands, the government is anything but stable, united, and restrained. The U.S. Army is trying to ripen peace in a compost heap when what it needs is a greenhouse. Given this, failure is almost inevitable. Corrupt, incompetent, and fractious local leaders can and will squander even the most spectacular military successes by U.S. forces. The only way to ensure unity of political and military effort would be to go the whole imperialist hog and govern directly. But in the modern world, this option is both morally and politically unacceptable and likely to generate such enormous resistance as to more than undermine any benefits it might bring.

Finally, it is essential to note that the political battle for Iraq is not only being fought inside that country. Equally crucially, it is being fought inside the United States. Not even the surge's most ardent advocates believe that the insurgency can be defeated quickly. For the surge to succeed, it must above all else boost popular support for the war at home. Success is only possible if the American people are willing to make a long-term commitment. But the very nature of the operation involves putting more U.S. troops in danger and so risks undermining support as casualties rise. Indeed, casualties have risen, with U.S. fatalities averaging around three and a half a day so far in 2007, compared with about two and half per day in 2006. Unsurprisingly, a June opinion poll recorded that the percentage of Americans in favor of keeping troops in Iraq had fallen since the surge began, from 43 percent to 39 percent, while the number in favor of bringing the troops home had risen, from 52 percent to 56 percent. Here too, the surge has failed, and this failure will almost certainly be fatal.

Guerrilla warfare, wrote Tolstoy, is "always successful, as history testifies." He rather overstated his point, but in truth, the modern record of counterinsurgency operations is very poor. Eventually the war in Iraq will come to an end, as every war does, but only when the Iraqis themselves have determined that the time is ripe. Until then, futile efforts to ignore the march of history will merely add to the cup of human suffering for no practical benefit. The guerrillas, says Tolstoy, "destroyed the Grande Armée piecemeal." We must hope against hope that a better fate awaits the American military. ■

Paul Robinson is an associate professor in public and international affairs at the University of Ottawa. He is the author of Military Honour and the Conduct of War: from Ancient Greece to Iraq.

Intelligence sources citing surveillance satellite imagery indicate that al-Qaeda has largely been successful in establishing a protected sanctuary along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and is now carrying out major terrorist training activities. A new generation of al-Qaeda terrorists is being prepared in these sanctuaries and is learning the tactical lessons gained from the fight against the U.S. in Iraq and Afghanistan, including the use of suicide bombers and improvised explosive devices. Al-Qaeda's ability to operate in the border region was facilitated by the withdrawal of Pakistani forces from Waziristan following agreements with Pashtun tribal chiefs in September 2006. After the Pakistani army withdrew its checkpoints, hundreds of Arab and other foreign volunteers flooded into the area. The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad has been pressuring President Pervez Musharraf to revoke the treaties he signed with the tribes that basically leaves policing up to them, but Musharraf is preoccupied with his domestic political problems and has only been able to pay lip service to cracking down on the terrorist revival. What this all means is subject to various interpretations, but some counterterrorist analysts are worried that Osama bin Laden has almost certainly seized the opportunity to train special new cells for operations in the United States and in Western Europe. American-initiated predator drone attacks directed against the identified al-Qaeda camps have failed to kill any high-level leaders and have been unable to significantly disrupt the terrorist training.



Advocates of war against Iran are again becoming more assertive in an effort to force the issue before President George W. Bush leaves office. Two of Congress's most pro-Israel

partisans, Sen. Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut and Congressman Tom Lantos of California, have been advocating a more aggressive policy toward Iran. Lieberman wields disproportionate power in the Senate because he heads the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs and because he constitutes a swing vote as a conservative Democrat who frequently supports Bush administration security policies. In a recent interview, he asserted that the surge in Iraq is working and that the U.S. has "the enemy on the run," a claim that even the White House would be unlikely to make. Regarding Iran, he is now insisting that "by its actions" interfering in Iraq, Iran has already declared war on the United States. Meanwhile, Lantos, head of the House Committee on International Relations, has been the driving force behind the Iran Counter-Proliferation Act of 2007, which has passed through committee and will undoubtedly be overwhelmingly approved by Congress. The act, which would impose sanctions on Iran's energy industry by blocking all foreign investment and forbidding all fuel sales, relies on coercion by the United States rather than international co-operation and would almost certainly fail to have any positive result. As most Iranian gasoline comes from refineries located in the Persian Gulf Emirates and in India, the act, if successfully implemented, would have a devastating impact on the Iranian people.

Philip Giraldi, a former CIA Officer, is a partner in Cannistraro Associates, an international security consultancy.

How to Win in Iraq

A stable Iraqi state would constitute a strategic victory—and the only one still possible.

By William S. Lind

AMONG THE BITS OF LORE of the United States Senate is a story that dates back to before I arrived there in 1973 as a staffer to Sen. Robert Taft Jr. of Ohio.

A senator—from New York, perhaps—known for depending wholly on his staff while treating it with contempt, told his assistant for foreign policy, “I want to give a major speech on the Vietnam War tomorrow morning. Stay here all night and write it.” With that, the senator headed out for a Capitol Hill reception rich with giant shrimp and large checks.

The staffer did as he was bidden, despite the fact that it was his anniversary, and his wife had made grand plans. The next morning, the senator found the text of the speech in his inbox. Snatching it eagerly, he proceeded directly to the floor of the Senate. His voice booming, he laid out a brilliant and incisive analysis of the war. At the bottom of the seventh page, he proclaimed, “I will now lay out my plan for winning the Vietnam War.” Page eight began with the words, “Now you’re on your own, you S.O.B. I quit.”

At the risk of finding myself in the same situation, I offer my plan for winning in Iraq.

The starting point, despite the disastrous course of the war to date, is to realize that the only possibilities for victory lie at the strategic level, not the tactical level. In part this is because we have botched the tactical level beyond redemption. While the efforts of General Petraeus and the Marines in Anbar

province to apply classic counter-insurgency doctrine and protect the population instead of brutalizing it are laudatory, they come too late.

In larger part, we cannot win at the tactical level because this kind of war is not additive. You cannot win at the strategic level simply by accumulating tactical successes, as our Second-Generation, firepower/attrition-oriented military automatically assumes. The strategic level follows its own logic, and strategic victory requires a sound strategy. When, as is currently the case, we have no strategy, this fact works against us. If, however, we adopt a prudent strategy, it can work for us. Because a higher level of war trumps a lower, we can yet redeem our many tactical failures at the strategic level. In other words, we can still win.

To devise a successful strategy, we must begin by defining what we mean by winning. The Bush administration, consistent with its record of military incompetence, continues to pursue the folly of maximalist objectives. It still defines victory as it did at the war’s outset: an Iraq that is an American satellite, friendly to Israel, happy to provide the U.S. with a limitless supply of oil and vast military bases from which American forces can dominate the region. None of these objectives are now attainable. None were ever attainable, no matter what our troops did. And as long as those objectives define victory, we are doomed to defeat.

Fortunately, another objective, the one that actually matters most, may, with luck and skill, still be achieved. That objective—restoring a state in what is now the stateless region of Mesopotamia—must become our new definition of victory.

This definition is not arbitrary. On the contrary, it reflects a correct, Fourth-Generation understanding of the threat. The serious threat to America, in the Middle East and elsewhere, is not any state. Rather, it is posed by a growing congeries of non-state organizations, which we label “terrorists.”

Non-state forces win when states are destroyed and are replaced by stateless regions. Even the long-term objective of al-Qaeda is not a state but a restored caliphate, a type of social organization that precedes the state by centuries. In the meantime, stateless chaos will serve very well, thank you.

And thank us they do because our initial invasion of Iraq and subsequent blunders, such as sending home the Iraqi army and civil service, destroyed the Iraqi state. It has not been rebuilt. We created the illusion of an Iraqi government in Baghdad’s Green Zone, but it is a government without a state, which is to say a Potemkin parliament. As long as Iraq remains stateless, our non-state enemies win.

The other side of the same coin, however, offers us a chance for victory. If a real state can be restored in Iraq, al-Qaeda and the other Islamic non-state

forces lose. That is true regardless of the nature of a restored Iraqi state. States dislike competition, and the definition of a state says that it must have a monopoly of violence within its borders. If that suggests something about the state of the state—in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere—well, it should.

Winning the war in Iraq therefore means seeing the re-creation of an Iraqi state. I say “seeing,” not “re-creating,” because our strategy, if it is to have a chance of success, must proceed from a realistic understanding of the situation in Iraq. We do not now have the power to re-create a state in Iraq, if we ever did. That is due in part to military failure, but it has more to do with a problem of legitimacy. As a foreign, Christian invader and occupier, we cannot create any legitimate institutions in Iraq. Quite the contrary: we have the reverse Midas touch. Any institution we create, or merely approve of and support, loses its legitimacy.

That means our new strategy must employ what the British military theorist Basil Liddell-Hart called an “indirect approach.” This is chancy. So is war itself. You cannot guarantee events; you try instead to influence them. Again, this reflects a realistic appreciation of the situation in Iraq. Our vaunted “boots on the ground” have been fought to a stalemate by flip flops in the alleys. In this kind of war, a stalemate means we have lost tactically. A combination of good strategy and some luck may yet enable us to pull our chestnuts out of the fire, but we are in no position to dictate events. We must try, instead, to shape and ride them.

An indirect approach to winning the war in Iraq on the strategic level has three central elements. The first is the lesson of Nixon’s trip to China.

That brilliant diplomatic move of establishing a rapprochement with China in effect won the Vietnam War for the United States. The threat that drew

us into a major war was not North Vietnam, a power of purely local significance. Rather, it was Mao’s doctrine of exporting wars of national liberation. (The phrase at the time was “Two, three, many Vietnams.”) The new relationship Nixon established with China ended that threat, rendering our defeat on the ground in Vietnam irrelevant.

In the case of the war in Iraq, Iran is China, and the first component of a strategy to win in Iraq is to establish a rapprochement with Iran. That is, a general settlement of differences. The Iranians have offered us such a settlement—including a compromise on the nuclear issue—on generous terms. But the Bush administration, true to its hubris, refused to consider it, going so far as to upbraid the Swiss for daring to forward the overture to us. It seems, however, to remain on the table.

The reason a strategy to win in Iraq must begin with a rapprochement with Iran is that any real Iraqi state is likely to be allied to Iran. Even the quisling al-Maliki government cowering in the Green Zone is close to Iran. A legitimate

A rapprochement with Iran may encourage Tehran to use its influence in Iraq to promote the revival of a state, but that is in Iran’s interest in any case once it is clear American troops are withdrawing. Conversely, until it is clear that America has given up its ambitions for large, permanent military bases in Iraq, Iran must continue to promote instability in its neighbor.

Once it becomes possible for both the U.S. and Iran to win in Iraq, we must move to the second element of our new strategy: allowing any elements that may hold the potential of restoring an Iraqi state to rise within Iraq. Consistent with an indirect approach, this means letting go.

At present, the United States works to suppress any elements that challenge the al-Maliki government. We teeter on the verge of open war with the most prominent of those elements, Muqtada al-Sadr and his Mahdi Army. On the ground, al-Sadr is the leader most likely to restore an Iraqi state, and thanks to his steadfast opposition to the American occupation, he has legitimacy.

THE WORLD’S PERCEPTION WILL BE THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS DEFEATED BECAUSE ITS MAIN REGIONAL RIVAL, IRAN, WILL EMERGE MUCH STRENGTHENED. BUT IF IRAN AND AMERICA ARE NO LONGER ENEMIES, THAT ISSUE BECOMES MOOT.

Iraqi government, which is virtually certain to be dominated by Iraq’s Shi’ites, will probably be much closer.

A restored Iraqi state that is allied with Iran will quickly roll up al-Qaeda and other non-state forces in Iraq, which is the victory we most require. But the world’s perception will still be that the United States was defeated because its main regional rival, Iran, will emerge much strengthened. If Iran and America are no longer enemies, that issue becomes moot.

While he may not have the support of a majority of Iraq’s Shi’ites, majorities do not make history. He is the leader of the Shi’ites who count, which is to say the young men willing to fight. Nor is al-Sadr merely a Shi’ite leader; he has kept open channels of communication to at least some of the Sunni insurgent groups—and perhaps channels not of communication only. Some of the Sunni insurgents clearly have benefited from Iranian support, which may have come through al-Sadr. Of late, al-Sadr has

taken care to restrain his followers from revenge attacks against Sunnis, stressing Shi'ite-Sunni unity against the foreign occupier. He has had his eye on the brass ring, the supreme leadership position in a restored Iraqi state, from the beginning. Now he may see it as within reach.

Our new strategy would let him grab it. Under his leadership, or that of anyone else in Iraq with a shred of legitimacy, a restored Iraqi state will not be a

leader of a restored Iraqi state will upset the Sunni regimes in the Middle East. Indeed it may, but that is not our problem. There is little the Sunni states can do about it, given the regions's geography. Syria is in a position to support a continued insurgency by Iraqi Sunnis, but Syria is ruled by an Alawite clique, and the Alawites are offshoots of Shi'ism. The Saudis will be both angry and terrified, but beyond supplying Iraq's Sunni insurgents with money and

The third and final element of a strategy for winning in Iraq is to withdraw all American forces as rapidly as possible, which means within 12-18 months. That is the only way we can create the space necessary for al-Sadr or someone else to re-create an Iraqi state. If we remain and work against him, a dicey task becomes that much harder, undermining both him and our strategic goal. And if we work for him, he loses legitimacy, the *sine qua non* for re-creating a state in Iraq.

In this strategy, our withdrawal is not that of a defeated army. It is a strategic withdrawal—a necessary part of our strategy. That distinction is a critical for our prestige in the world, for the future health of America's Armed Forces, and for our domestic politics, which could be roiled beyond what any conservative would desire by a vast military defeat.

If our new strategy works and our withdrawal is followed by the restoration of a real Iraqi state, we will have learned our lesson about wars of choice, but avoided a catastrophe. If it fails and Mesopotamia remains a stateless region, Iraq is no worse off than it is now, and our troops will be safely out of the mess.

There is no chance the Bush administration, locked in a *Totentanz* with its dreams of world empire, will adopt this strategy. But the presidential debate season has already begun, and a bevy of candidates in both parties are looking around for something, anything that might get us out of the Iraqi morass without accepting defeat. If just one of them picks up on it, those yawningly dull debates might get a lot more interesting. ■

William S. Lind is director of the Center for Cultural Conservatism at the Free Congress Foundation in Washington, D.C.

THERE IS, OF COURSE, NO GUARANTEE THAT AL-SADR OR ANYONE ELSE IN IRAQ CAN RESTORE A STATE. THE ONLY SURE THING IS THAT WE CANNOT DO SO, AS FOUR YEARS OF FAILURE HAVE AMPLY DEMONSTRATED.

friend of America. Given what we have done to that country, we can hardly expect it to be. But our new strategy has no such unattainable objective. Its objective is solely the restoration of a real state, and that al-Sadr may be able to accomplish. If he can, we will have little to complain about in terms of his toleration of al-Qaeda or other Fourth Generation elements. Nor will his close relationship with Iran be a problem, given that we will no longer regard Iran as an enemy.

There is, of course, no guarantee that al-Sadr or anyone else in Iraq can restore a state. The only sure thing is that we cannot do so, as four years of failure have amply demonstrated. The one chance of victory we have left is to get out of the way of al-Sadr and anyone else in Iraq who might be able to re-create an Iraqi state, praying fervently that they succeed. Having failed in our own efforts, it is time to give the Iraqis and Dame Fortune our place at the gaming table.

Some may object that a rapprochement with Iran coupled with allowing al-Sadr or someone like him to become the

volunteers, which they are already doing, they cannot intervene. Saudi Arabia's armed forces are a joke, and overt Saudi military intervention in Iraq would quickly fail. All the other Sunni states are too far away to do anything effective.

Moreover, by accentuating the Sunni-Shi'ite rivalry within Islam, we may help fold Islamic expansionism back on itself, an essential quality of any indirect approach. As James Kurth wrote in a September 2005 article in this magazine entitled "Splitting Islam":

If the Sunni-Shi'ite conflict became not only intense and widespread but also prolonged, perhaps as much so as the Sino-Soviet conflict during the last three decades of the Cold War, the global Islamist movement might have almost no meaning or attraction at all. In the Muslim world there might be Sunni Islamists and Shi'ite Islamists, but each might consider their greatest enemy to be not the United States, but each other.

How Empires End

Responding to the call of Pope Urban II at Claremont in 1095, the Christian knights of the First Crusade set out for the Holy Land. In 1099, Jerusalem was captured.

As their port in Palestine, the Crusaders settled on Acre on the Mediterranean.

There they built the great castle that was overrun by Saladin in 1187 but retaken by Richard the Lionheart in 1191. Acre became the capital of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and stronghold of the Crusader state, which fell in a bloody siege by the Mameluks in 1291. The Christians who had not fled were all massacred.

The ruins of Acre are now a tourist attraction.

Any who have visited this site, the last outpost of Christendom in the Holy Land before General Allenby marched into Jerusalem in 1917, cannot—on reading of the massive U.S. embassy rising in Baghdad—but think of Acre.

At a cost of \$600 million, with walls able to withstand mortar and rocket fire and space to accommodate 1,000 Americans, this mammoth embassy, the largest on earth, will squat on the banks of the Tigris inside the Green Zone.

But a decade hence, will the U.S. ambassador be occupying this imperial compound? Or will it be like the ruins of Acre?

What raises the question is a sense that the United States, this time, is truly about to write off Iraq as a lost cause.

The Republican lines on Capitol Hill are crumbling. Starting with Richard Lugar, one GOP senator after another has risen to urge a drawdown of American forces and a diplomatic solution to the war.

But how can U.S. diplomats win at a conference table what 150,000 American troops cannot secure on a battlefield?

Though Henry Kissinger was an advocate of this unnecessary and unwise war, he is not necessarily wrong when he warns of “geopolitical calamity.” Nor is Ryan Crocker, U.S. envoy in Iraq, necessarily wrong when he says a U.S. withdrawal may be the end of the American war, but it will be the start of bloodier wars in Iraq and across the region.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari also warns of the perils of a rapid withdrawal: “The dangers vary from civil war to dividing the country to regional wars. ... the danger is huge. Until the Iraqi forces and institutions complete their readiness, there is a responsibility on the U.S. and other countries to stand by the Iraqi government and the Iraqi people to help build up their capabilities.”

In urging a redeployment of U.S. forces out of Iraq and a new focus on diplomacy, Lugar listed four strategic goals: Prevent creation of a safe haven for terrorists. Prevent sectarian war from spilling out into the broader Middle East. Prevent Iran’s domination of the region. Limit the loss of U.S. credibility through the region and world as a result of a failed mission in Iraq.

But how does shrinking the American military power and presence in Iraq advance any of these goals?

Long-time critics of the war like Gen. William Odom say it is already lost and fighting on will only further bleed the country and make the ultimate price even higher. The general may be right in saying it is time to cut our losses. But we should take a hard look at what those losses may be.

It is a near certainty the U.S.-backed government will fall, and friends we leave behind will suffer the fate of our Vietnamese and Cambodian friends in 1975. As U.S. combat brigades move out, contractors, aid workers, and diplomats left behind will be more vulnerable to assassination and kidnapping. There could be a stampede for the exit and a Saigon ending in the Green Zone.

The civil and sectarian war will surely escalate when we go, with Iran aiding its Shia allies and Sunni nations aiding the Sunnis. A breakup of the country seems certain. Al-Qaeda will claim it has run the American superpower out of Iraq and take the lessons it has learned to Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States. The Turks, with an army already on the border, will go in to secure their interests in not having the Kurdish PKK operating from Iraq and in guaranteeing there is no Kurdistan. What will America do then?

Here at home, the argument over who is responsible for the worst strategic debacle in American history will be poisonous.

With a U.S. defeat in Iraq, American prestige would plummet across the region. Who would rely on a U.S. commitment for its security? Like the British and French before us, we will be heading home from the Middle East.

We are about to witness how empires end. ■

Richardson Fails Up

His appearance on “Meet the Press” was widely mocked as the worst on the Sunday talk-show circuit in living memory. His debate performances have been

unimpressive, except when they have been embarrassing. His policy knowledge is superficial, and his positions are clearly opportunistic. Bill Richardson has never had it so good.

Despite his many mistakes and his coming from a state with few electoral votes and fewer big donors, he has managed to turn in a respectable second quarter, raising \$7 million. And he comes close to tying John Edwards in third place in the Democratic presidential field. Clearly, obscurity has its advantages.

On paper, Richardson looks like the sort of well-traveled, experienced candidate that political parties seek. It would appear, as one of his comical campaign commercials suggested, that he has almost too much experience for the job. He hails from a Mountain West state that has been closely divided in recent presidential elections, potentially offering Democrats the chance to put a red-state governor on their ticket. As the only Hispanic candidate running, he theoretically has an advantage with a growing Hispanic voting bloc. He was even briefly considered for the second place on the Democratic ticket in 2004.

The story behind his “consideration” is a good example of Richardson’s success in promoting an image of himself as an experienced statesman without having the qualifications to back it up. After making his desire known to the Kerry campaign, he withdrew from the process soon after.

There is a good reason Richardson would not be interested in extensive attention to his career. Easily elected to

Congress in 1980 in a redrawn, heavily Democratic district in northern New Mexico, Richardson did not distinguish himself until the Clinton years when he became what the president jokingly referred to as “undersecretary for thugs” because of his penchant for negotiating with disreputable regimes for the release of prisoners. As U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Richardson mostly just kept the seat warm between Madeleine Albright’s departure and the start of Richard Holbrooke’s tenure.

As secretary of energy, Richardson received his biggest public humiliation. “You’ve squandered your treasure,” Sen. Robert Byrd memorably told him during an oversight hearing looking into the security breaches at Los Alamos National Labs. While Richardson was only one in a line of incompetent administrators at DOE, the failures on his watch were all the more egregious since they concerned the loss or mishandling of sensitive nuclear weapons data.

But thanks to such “experience,” Richardson continues to be reasonably competitive, drawing as much as 12 percent support in recent Iowa polling. If more realized just how meaningless the governor’s deceptively long resume is, and if they understood what an easy political environment New Mexico is for him, no strategists and certainly no voters would give him the slightest chance.

The greatest Richardson myths are his value to the Democratic ticket and the significance of his re-election in 2006 as proof of his cross-party appeal. While New Mexico often follows the national

mood in presidential elections, it is unlike any of its neighbors in its politics, culture, and demographics. For a so-called red state, the local Republicans basically represent a permanent minority. Though re-elected with a hefty 69 percent of the vote, Richardson was initially running against a virtual non-candidate, J.D. Damron, whom the state Republicans replaced halfway through the election year because he refused to campaign actively. The replacement, former state party chairman John Dendahl, had a poor reputation in the state as the GOP’s hatchet man and had only a couple months to put together a campaign organization.

Second only to Mitt Romney in shameless conversions, Richardson has moved from a reliable DLC centrist on foreign policy and a supporter of the Iraq invasion to the most ardent—and most uninformed—antiwar Democrat of the top four. Pressed on the Iraq War supplemental in March, he confessed to not knowing about the substance of the legislation: “I’m just not familiar with the supplemental. Which one is that?” Despite portraying himself as the lone major candidate competent enough to withdraw all American forces from Iraq, he has abandoned his support for the Feingold-Reid amendment, which would have cut off funds for the war next March. More recently, he supported then opposed the failed Senate immigration bill, all the while giving the impression that he had never understood most of its provisions.

Richardson has discovered an effective strategy for coming from nowhere to being a credible challenger for the Democratic nomination: tout past experience despite present incompetence. It has worked for him before. ■

Santorum Against the World

The ex-senator sets the Culture War aside to preach paranoia in our time.

By Michael Brendan Dougherty

FORMER SENATOR Rick Santorum earned the sobriquet “the believer” during his time in Washington. A staunch Catholic, he made cultural conservative issues his personal crusade, frequently giving impassioned speeches on behalf of the unborn and leading the effort to amend the Constitution to ban same-sex marriage. Though self-effacing and affable in private, on the Senate floor he became a scourge in the hands of an angry God.

That manner won him few admirers outside the value-voters set, and in 2006 the Iraq War became a political millstone around Santorum’s thin neck. After taking the worst thumping in the contested Senate races, he seemed destined to disappear. But instead of cashing in at a lobbying firm or cruising on his reputation through the conservative dinner circuit, the senator embraced the war issue. Now he is building support for regime change in Iran among social conservatives and reframing the war on terror into a much larger conflict that stretches back over a millennium. In his right hand, he holds a growing list of America’s enemies, and he’s reading off their names to everyone who will listen—at think tanks, on Christian radio, and perhaps soon at a theater near you.

In his post Senate speeches, Santorum has explained how he transformed from culture warrior to foreign-policy warrior: “As I went on the campaign trail, it was very obvious to me that we were losing the war. Yes, we were losing the war in Baghdad to some degree, but more important we were losing the war

on the streets of Pennsylvania.” Collapsing public support, in Santorum’s mind, was the result of a failure to “name the enemy” and educate Americans about the nature of the threat. “They didn’t think there was any consequence of losing, they didn’t think we could lose and even if we did, it didn’t matter.”

The former senator is quick to remind, “I still care very deeply about the social conservative issues. Can America continue to be a great country if it is no longer a good country, or a moral country? That is the long-term crisis that America faces. But I saw a more immediate short-term problem in the foreign policy arena.” For Santorum, this short-term problem is global in scope, involving not only “Islamofascists” but also Latin American populists and Russia. Solving it requires the full moral, diplomatic, and military effort of the American people in a struggle he says will demand more than World War II did of the greatest generation.

In many ways, Santorum’s latest project builds on his reputation as a social conservative. After leaving office, he immediately became a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, a think tank built to promote what it calls “the Great Western ethical imperatives” in Washington. The EPPC is known for its groundbreaking work on life and family issues. Now the former senator writes up a bulletin for the center called “The Weekly Threat Roundup,” which regularly details the nefarious doings of Iran and Venezuela—an alliance particularly troubling to Santorum.

For years, James Dobson, the Christian psychologist and popular radio talk-show host has been following Santorum’s efforts on behalf of socially conservative values. They both recently made *Time*’s list of the 25 most influential evangelicals, a true feat for a Catholic like Santorum. Like many evangelicals, Dobson’s interests now include foreign policy. In May, he dedicated two days of his show to broadcasting a Santorum stemwinder. In it, the former senator explained that his current work is “a family issue, because it concerns the security of every family in this nation.” Moving on to his list, Santorum asked impatiently, “Did you know that Venezuela will shortly spend \$30 billion to build 20 military bases in neighboring Bolivia, which will dominate the borders with Chile, Peru, Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil?” And this was of no small concern because Latin American leftism is apparently in alliance with Islamic fascists. “How so? The enemy of my enemy is my friend.”

But wait, there’s more. “You have Russia ... increasingly looking like the old Russia in the way they support nations that align against the United States.” And so the list grows.

After dipping gingerly into the differences between Sunni and Shi’ite Islam, Santorum concluded that Iran poses the greatest threat to the United States. In previous centuries, he explained, Shi’ite regimes had been at peace with the West. But ever since Khomeini re-interpreted that tradition of Islam, Iran had been radicalized. “And so now we have

Iran in a position to project power and to use Sunni-like theology, if you will..." he lowered his voice, "to conquer the world."

After those last four words, you expect a laugh track to kick in, but it never comes. Instead, the speech grinds on as Santorum warns of the "gathering storm" and draws parallels between our time and the late 1930s and early '40s. Warning that America will face an array of exotic threats alone, Santorum begins to quote the June 1940 address of Winston Churchill to the British people in which the prime minister girded them for the coming battle of Britain. In the audio recording sold by Focus on the Family, as Santorum's voice solemnly quiets, the ghostly crackle of Churchill's original rises. Santorum closes by explaining that defeat means to "sink into the abyss of a new dark age." Dobson emerges to speculate that this may be some of "the most prophetic work" his ministry has brought to its audience, saying, "Rick Santorum gets it. He may have been the finest senator we have had in many decades. He is part of the heritage of Winston Churchill."

Santorum has been giving similar speeches wherever he can. To a standing room only crowd at the close of the 2007 Conservative Political Action Conference, his talk was preceded by a PowerPoint presentation by David Horowitz of the Terrorism Awareness Project. Grainy photos of suicide bombings in Israel and Iraq flashed rapidly across the projection screen to a soundtrack ripped out of "Classical Thunder." The lesson: nowhere do Palestinians or other Arabs work for simple political goals, such as land or national sovereignty. They wish solely for the destruction of Israel and the Great Satan. No event is discreet: each bombing from 1979 until today is connected, and appeasement is not an option. The

words of radical clerics fill the screen, implying that Islam itself is the problem. One onlooker explained how this presentation "revived [his] dedication to this battle."

Santorum amplifies these sentiments when he talks about the historic animus between Islam and Christendom. "We're not going to solve the problem by just chasing down a few bad guys in Iraq. ... We are in the decisive ideological struggle of the 21st century. This is not just a military conflict, it is an ideological conflict." And confronting this menace means reaching beyond the war on terror. According to Santorum, the West must witness to Muslims, not for Christ but for Modernity. We must also, in order to have allies, re-evangelize Europe for Christianity, lest Europe die out and be replaced with "Euristan." Santorum never explains exactly how the United States can begin transforming the spiritual and ideological culture of both Europe and the Middle East—he just knows that it is essential to America's security.

HIS CREDIBILITY AMONG SOCIAL CONSERVATIVES IS THE ANVIL ON WHICH HAWKS CAN FORGE AN UNBREAKABLE WAR CONSENSUS WITH THE REPUBLICAN BASE.

As Santorum's list of enemies has grown, so has his ambition. His role in the fight against America's enemies is no longer confined to Washington D.C. "We have to fund and produce artifacts of the culture that communicate the message on a broad-based scheme. ... If you wanted to win America," he asks "would you rather have someone give a great political speech or have a movie in every theater across America?" Citing Michael Moore's documentaries and movies like "Syriana," Santorum has expressed interest in becoming a movie producer himself and has reportedly met with the producer of

"The Passion of the Christ," Steve McEveety. His film would center around three Iranian brothers, one of whom comes to the U.S. as a terrorist. Santorum insists, "It's not real yet in the sense that we don't have the money. But we're working on it." He hopes the film will be action-packed and entertaining while at the same time educational.

By making faraway fascists the top issue for families, Santorum's struggle against Islamic fascism (and Latin American populism and Russia) has fused the two dominant strands of conservative politics: neoconservative foreign policy and traditionalist social policy. His credibility among social conservatives is the anvil on which hawks can forge an unbreakable war consensus with the base of the Republican Party.

Whereas each bloody headline from Iraq serves to chastise the American public and its political class, discouraging them from further interventionism, the effect is reversed on Santorum.

Every roadside bomb demonstrates to him that powerful enemies outside Iraq are aligning for our destruction. Falling public support is further proof that Republicans have failed to explain the nature of the current struggle. His own defeat in last year's election didn't prompt him to rethink his crusade but to redouble it.

Santorum's former colleagues draw other lessons from his defeat: you cannot win with the base alone. America does not want a new list of enemies or a mission to change the world. Nor does the country want "believers" who insist that we do. ■

Between Pews & Polls

Have values voters lost their clout?

By W. James Antle III

HAS THE RELIGIOUS Right become irrelevant? Such a question would have been unthinkable only three years ago. According to political analysts across the ideological spectrum, the first big lesson of the 2004 election was that the parties were now aligned around values rather than economics. The second was that socially conservative “values voters” outnumbered their secular liberal counterparts, to the net benefit of Republican candidates. White evangelical Christians make up the GOP’s largest single voting bloc.

You wouldn’t be able to tell this by looking at the Republican presidential field. No candidate with a history of identifying with this bloc polls better than low single digits nationally. Ross Douthat of *The Atlantic Monthly*, observing that Iowa is somewhere “a semi-obscure social conservative ought to be able to make some noise,” pointed to a Mason-Dixon poll showing “Smike Brownbuckabee”—a composite of Sam Brownback and former Mike Huckabee—at 13 percent. But in the 2000 caucuses, Alan Keyes won 14 percent by himself.

Instead the field is led by Rudolph Giuliani, a twice-divorced supporter of legal abortion and same-sex civil unions. Mitt Romney, the top-tier candidate who has worked hardest at courting religious conservatives, was pro-choice until 2005. Fred Thompson is also expected to make a play for these voters, but detractors are already digging into what they say is his own pro-choice past.

Among the leading contenders, John McCain has been allied with social conservatives the longest. But he has never seemed especially comfortable with

them, famously blasting two Religious Right leaders as “agents of intolerance” during his 2000 campaign meltdown. They are equally offhand with him. And McCain’s record has its blemishes, with votes for taxpayer funded embryonic stem-cell research and against the federal marriage amendment.

How did religious conservatives end up without a logical candidate? It isn’t because their influence is on the wane otherwise. Even if organizations like the Christian Coalition have atrophied, white evangelicals cast the highest percentage of votes for Republican congressional candidates—72 percent—in 2006. Pollster Tony Fabrizio’s vast survey of Republicans shows moralists, a different but overlapping category of conservative voters, making up the same share of the GOP today as in 1997 (24 percent, the largest group), while the ranks of economic conservatives have shrunk by nearly two-thirds.

If social conservatives coalesced around a single candidate, their choice would stand an excellent chance of being the nominee. But it isn’t that simple. Religious conservative voters are much more diverse than their media image would suggest, and Christian Right leaders are far more pragmatic—and more solicitous of the GOP’s electoral interests. The movement doesn’t always support its own. According to one poll, only 6 percent of evangelicals support Huckabee, a Southern Baptist minister.

This is nothing new. Pat Robertson was the first Republican presidential candidate to come directly from the Religious Right. He did well in several states,

coming in second in the Iowa caucuses, and collected over 2 million votes before dropping out. But Robertson did so without the endorsement of Jerry Falwell and many other prominent Christian Right leaders, who were on board with the frontrunner, George H.W. Bush.

In his obituary for Falwell, conservative activist Howard Phillips recounted that the Moral Majority founder had decided to back Bush as early as 1981. “I protested, saying that Bush stood for a great many things with which both Jerry and I profoundly disagreed,” Phillips recalled. “Jerry replied that, by backing Vice President Bush early on, he would gain his confidence and have greater influence over his policies.”

After 1988, this was Robertson’s approach as well. He tacitly supported Bob Dole over the more socially conservative Pat Buchanan in 1996 and backed George W. Bush over Gary Bauer in 2000. When Robertson tapped Ralph Reed to run the Christian Coalition, their strategy was to guarantee the Christian Right a place at the table within the broader GOP coalition, working alongside other elements of the conservative movement.

Ever since its emergence as a self-conscious political movement, the Religious Right’s fortunes have been very closely tied to those of the Republican Party. Christian leaders like Falwell, Robertson, and Robert Grant worked in tandem with such movement conservatives as Phillips, Ed McAteer, Paul Weyrich, and Richard Viguerie. Before their efforts at organizing early groups like the Religious Roundtable and Moral

Majority, there hadn't been much of a values vote to speak of for decades.

Humiliated by the 1925 Scopes trial, disillusioned by Prohibition's failure, and heavily fundamentalist, conservative Protestants had low rates of political participation. Many did not vote; those who did were often Southern Democrats. Their leaders were more focused on evangelism than legislation or electioneering.

If religious conservatives were a sleeping giant in American politics, they were also very slow to awaken. Some were drawn to the anti-communist cause in the 1950s. The 1962 Supreme Court ruling that ended organized prayer in public schools and another decision circumscribing Bible reading were major catalysts. So was the 1960s counterculture, which provoked a socially conservative Silent Majority response. By 1972, the Democrats were being derided as the party of "acid, amnesty, and abortion," the last becoming a national issue when *Roe v. Wade* was handed down the next year.

Despite all that, evangelicals did not immediately reject the increasingly secular Democrats in favor of the GOP. When the outspokenly born-again Jimmy Carter was the Democratic nominee in 1976, many religious conservatives thought the McGovernites had been replaced with one of their own. Carter is believed to have won somewhere between 60 and 65 percent of the evangelical vote.

Yet Carter was a profound disappointment to many of these evangelicals, and his presidency helped drive them into the arms of the GOP. As president, he turned out to be more liberal than expected on abortion and other social issues. The IRS targeted the tax exemptions of insufficiently integrated Christian schools, with the administration's support, and Carter was seen as tilting toward the Palestinians rather than Israel in his Middle East policies.

Evangelicals soon turned away from the Baptist president and toward a divorced former actor. The founding fathers of the Christian Right courted Ronald Reagan, and Reagan returned the favor. Speaking at a gathering of evangelicals early in the campaign, Reagan, the first unabashedly pro-life GOP presidential nominee, wowed the crowd. "I know you can't endorse me," he said. "But I endorse you."

The 1980 Republican platform reflected the Religious Right's new influence. Gerald Ford's equivocating about *Roe* was replaced with a strong pro-life plank. The document also endorsed traditional family values and a constitutional amendment restoring school prayer. The endorsement of the Equal Rights Amendment, which had appeared in every Republican platform since 1940 (and which the GOP had backed before the Democrats) was dropped.

In 1980, Reagan beat Carter among evangelical voters by 25 points. Reagan's margin swelled to 62 points in 1984. As Republican strategist Jeffrey Bell recently noted in *The Weekly Standard*, "Thus the swing in terms of partisan margin among theologically conservative white Protestants was a breathtaking 87 points."

The human-life amendment didn't pass, never winning more than 49 votes in a Republican-controlled Senate—18 votes short of two-thirds majority. Neither did the amendment promoting school prayer. But the issues remained powerful motivators of Republican turnout. And the Reagan administration did restrict public funding of abortion and nudge the judiciary to the right on issues of importance to religious conservatives.

Twelve years of Reagan-Bush judicial appointments weren't enough to overturn *Roe*, evangelicals learned in 1992. *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* was a disappointment that later paid political dividends, however. The decision expanded the number of permissible state abortion

restrictions while affirming *Roe*. This allowed pro-life legislators to win tangible victories in the areas where their position was popular while more controversial bans were still off the table. Partial-birth abortion bans, waiting periods, and parental-notification laws became some of the Religious Right's biggest policy successes.

That makes the movement's current dilemma all the more perplexing: their party may nominate Giuliani, whose social views are indistinguishable from Hillary Clinton's. And many religious conservatives seem mightily tempted to support him. Giuliani was well received at Regent University—"He did a great job," Pat Robertson enthused—and at Houston Baptist College. The dean of Regent's Robertson School of Government has endorsed him. No anybody-but-Rudy campaign is yet on the horizon.

If this is surprising, it shouldn't be. Giuliani guarantees Christian Right leaders a place at the table. And he might be the lesser of two evils—whatever else he would do, he probably wouldn't prosecute pro-life activists under racketeering laws as the last President Clinton did.

Not everyone agrees—Richard Land and James Dobson are Giuliani critics—but the opposition is muted, even though religious conservatives could probably stop Giuliani from being nominated and could certainly keep him from being elected. Evangelicals represented a third of Bush's supporters in 2004, a slice impossible to make up elsewhere even for a pol as popular as Rudy.

Exercising this leverage would require religious conservatives to give up their preference for access over results, a difficult thing for a movement so thoroughly integrated into the party structure to do. But the Religious Right can only be as relevant as it wants to be. ■

W. James Antle III is associate editor of *The American Spectator*.

Breaking Bush's Resistance

A pending court case could expose the administration's torture regime.

By James Bovard

FROM THE FIRST DAYS after the Abu Ghraib photos hit the airwaves, the torture scandal has epitomized the worst of the Bush presidency. A timid media, a cowardly opposition party, and a refusal by most Americans to face the grisly facts has contained the damage since 2004. But the web of lies and lawlessness is rapidly unraveling. Leaks, foreign challenges, military officers revolting, and a pending Supreme Court case could set off a tidal wave of revulsion against the administration's barbaric policies.

When President Bush was pressed by NBC's Matt Lauer last September about the use of brutal interrogation methods, he replied, "Whatever we have done is legal. ... We had lawyers look at it and say, 'Mr. President, this is lawful.'" But Bush's legal lackeys also proclaim that the president's command is the highest law, and U.S. torture has been confirmed by FBI agents, former military interrogators, a DoD Inspector General report, and court cases around the globe.

Denial has been the Bush team's first line of defense. From early 2005 onward, Bush repeatedly declared that the U.S. does not use rendition—the transport of terror suspects to other countries where they are tortured. He told the *New York Times* in January 2005 that "torture is never acceptable, nor do we hand over people to countries that do torture." Doing so would be a federal crime.

But the evidence of CIA "torture taxis" secretly racing around the globe carrying gagged, sedated detainees to some of the most brutal regimes in the world proved too much for Bush to

deny. He revised his defense in April 2005: "We operate within the law and we send people to countries where they say they are not going to torture people." But then why would the U.S. go to the trouble of kidnapping people—Canadian Maher Arar, who was grabbed at JFK Airport and renditioned to Syria or Australian Mamduh Habib, seized in Pakistan and flown to Egypt, for instance—and turning them over to governments the U.S. has long denounced for using torture?

In June, the Council of Europe issued a report condemning the CIA's exploitation of NATO military agreements to run secret prisons in Romania and Poland where detainees were tortured. The report called for banning "the Bush administration mindset" that says "if it is illegal for us to use such a practice at home or on our own citizens, let us export or outsource it so we will not be held to account for it."

While Bush bears ultimate blame for the U.S. embrace of torture, Vice President Cheney's team often drove the policy. The *Washington Post* reported on June 25 that starting in January 2002, "Cheney turned his attention to the practical business of crushing a captive's will to resist. The vice president's office played a central role in shattering limits on coercion in U.S. custody." The *Post* noted, "Cheney and his allies ... pioneered a novel distinction between forbidden 'torture' and permitted use of 'cruel, inhuman or degrading' methods of questioning." The Geneva Conventions, which are binding under U.S. law, make no such distinction.

The key was a radical new understanding of torture spelled out in an Aug. 1, 2002 Justice Department memo that narrowed the definition to suffering "equivalent in intensity" to "organ failure ... or even death." Call it a license to almost kill.

Top military experts opposed the redefinition, but a few high-ranking civilian appointees at the Pentagon scorned the veterans. Cheney has been especially enthusiastic about simulated drowning of detainees known as waterboarding even though the U.S. government classified this as a war crime in 1947.

Though neoconservatives have always prided themselves on being more anti-Soviet than God, the U.S. government turned to an unlikely source for inspiration to fulfill Cheney's vision of shattering detainees' resistance. After 9/11, the Pentagon and CIA "reverse engineered" many Soviet interrogation techniques that the U.S. had long denounced as torture. Policymakers looked at the "Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape" training American aviators received to endure Soviet interrogation for leads on how the U.S. could break the will of Muslim detainees. A 1956 *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* article entitled, "Communist Interrogation" described how the Soviets used "isolation, anxiety, fatigue, lack of sleep, uncomfortable temperatures" on their targets. The Bush administration adapted the same techniques at Guantanamo and the secret prisons scattered throughout the world, the *New York Times* reported last month.

The administration has an almost perfect record in its hearings over detainees at Guantanamo, but officers are increasingly refusing to carry out orders that they consider immoral or unjust. Lt. Col. Stuart Couch, a veteran Marine aviator, resigned from the prosecution of Mohamedou Ould Slahi because the U.S. had tortured the defendant. The *Wall Street Journal* recently summarized a Pentagon report on this case: "On July 17, 2003, a masked interrogator told Slahi he had dreamed of watching detainees dig a grave. ... The interrogator said he saw 'a plain, pine casket with [Slahi's] identification number painted in orange lowered into the ground.' Three days later, the interrogator told Slahi that his family was 'incarcerated.'" Two weeks later, the *Journal* reported, "an interrogation chief visited the prisoner posing as a White House representative. ... He gave the prisoner a forged memorandum indicating that Mr. Slahi's mother was being shipped to Guantanamo, and that officials had concerns about her safety as the only woman amid hundreds of male prisoners..." Threatening Slahi, who was also physically brutalized, with the prospect of his mother's rape was the final straw for Couch.

The torture of David Hicks, an Australian seized in Afghanistan and sent to Gitmo in early 2002, became an international cause célèbre. Hicks, who joined the Kosovo Liberation Army, a terrorist organization supported by the U.S. government, before fighting alongside the Taliban, was sexually assaulted, beaten with a rifle butt, kept in isolation in the dark for 244 days, prohibited from sleeping for long periods, threatened with firearms during interrogations, and psychologically tormented.

He was one of the first people tried by the Gitmo military tribunals. Though former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld once called him one of the most dangerous terrorists in the world,

after Hicks agreed to plead guilty to material support of terrorism, he was sentenced to nine months confinement—a typical sentence for a misdemeanor in most states. As part of his plea agreement, Hicks was obliged to declare that he "had never been illegally treated by any person or persons while in the custody and control of the United States" and to swear that his guilty plea was made voluntarily, despite all the beatings he had received.

From the start of the torture scandal, the Bush team has done whatever it can to suppress the facts and punish truth-tellers. The initial photos from Abu Ghraib would have had far less impact had it not been for a courageous report by Major Gen. Antonio Taguba detailing far worse abuses. Seymour Hersh recently revealed in the *New Yorker* how Taguba was vindictively forced into retirement by the Pentagon because of the report. Taguba said Rumsfeld deceived Congress in May 2004 when he portrayed himself as a blindsided victim of a leak when testifying shortly after the Taguba report and the Abu Ghraib photos were posted online. Rumsfeld claimed to have not seen Taguba's report when they met the day before he first testified, even though Taguba had submitted more than a dozen copies to the Pentagon and elsewhere in the military command structure. Doug Feith, who set policy for detainees in Iraq, shotgunning an e-mail around the Pentagon prohibiting officials from reading the Taguba report. Feith also warned that Pentagon officials should not discuss the report with anyone, even family members. One Pentagon consultant declared that the Bush team's "basic strategy was 'prosecute the kids in the photographs but protect the big picture.'" Suppressing the worst evidence was key. Taguba told Hersh that he had seen "a video of a male American soldier in uniform sodomizing a female

detainee." This could not have been spun away as mere college fraternity hazing.

Taguba had been ordered to focus only on the actions of the military police at Abu Ghraib. He could not examine the responsibility of senior officers or the Pentagon for the atrocities he found. Col. Tom Pappas, the commander of the battalion that carried out the abuses photographed at Abu Ghraib, "was granted immunity in return for his testimony against a dog handler," as author Andrew Cockburn derisively noted.

The torture regime rests on the notion that anyone labeled an enemy combatant deserves whatever harsh treatment he receives. Combatant Status Review Tribunals are used to confirm the guilt of people sent to Guantanamo as enemy combatants, but the tribunals routinely rely on tortured confessions and hearsay evidence, and almost any allegation can be sufficient to perpetuate detention. Candace Gorman, a Chicago attorney representing two Guantanamo detainees, noted that in one case "the [tribunal] darkly noted that the prisoner owned a Casio wristwatch (which could conceivably be used to time explosives). ... Karate skills, knowledge of computers and participation in the pilgrimage to Mecca have also been considered factors supporting 'continuing detention.'"

Lt. Col. Stephen Abraham, a 26-year Army veteran who had a pivotal role in gathering evidence for the tribunals, filed a sworn affidavit last month declaring that the process of identifying enemy combatants at Guantanamo was a sham and that officers were pressured to find defendants guilty. Abraham noted, "What purported to be specific statements of fact lacked even the most fundamental earmarks of objectively credible evidence." He noted that intelligence agencies refused to divulge exculpatory information that might clear the

accused. The Pentagon conducted more than 500 hearings and found almost all the accused guilty, though sometimes a second or third panel of officers had to be summoned to convict. Abraham noted, "In very few instances would you find very specific information from which you could conclude he was an enemy combatant."

In June 2006, the Supreme Court ruled that the administration was dead wrong in claiming that the Geneva Conventions did not apply to detainees in the war on terror. The Bush administration responded by railroading the Military Commissions Act through Congress last September. The MCA retroactively pardoned torturers and torture policy-makers for war crimes committed after 9/11, rubber-stamped the administration's Guantanamo tribunals, and blocked people labeled as enemy combatants from filing *habeas corpus* petitions in American courts. Bush pushed Congress to speedily pass the act because "as long as the War Crimes Act hangs over their heads, [CIA interrogators] will not take the steps necessary to protect" Americans.

As part of the procedure for establishing the "legal" limits of interrogation, the MCA requires the president to put in writing his definition of what constitutes "outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment." The Senate Intelligence Committee insists that the new standards be reviewed by the Justice Department and that the review be provided to Congress. But the Bush team is refusing to divulge the Justice Department's verdict on Bush's latest revised definition of non-torture. The *Washington Post* noted, "Lawmakers will be asked to accept Bush's assurance in the executive order [on new interrogation standards] that the program has been deemed lawful." In the meantime, the CIA enhanced interrogation program remains in limbo

despite Bush's tub-thumping during the congressional election season about such interrogation "tools" were needed immediately.

Thus far, the Democrats have been among the least of Bush's torture travails. From the time the first Abu Ghraib photos appeared, Democrats have portrayed themselves as the Party of Virtue that could never condone such indignities, but they have controlled Capitol Hill for six months and not issued a single subpoena on interrogation practices.

On June 19, Democrats had the perfect opportunity to showcase their superior values. The Senate Intelligence Committee held a hearing on the nomination of John Rizzo to become general counsel for the CIA. Rizzo, a 30-year CIA veteran, was acting general counsel in 2002 when the new torture rules were put in place and gave the CIA's approval to the Bush administration's 2002 redefinition of torture. Yet, as the *New York Times* noted, "no member of the Senate Intelligence Committee directly challenged the agency's secret detention or harsh interrogation practices." Only Sen. Dianne Feinstein voiced opposition to his confirmation. "Affable and calm, Rizzo rolled a pen between his fingers as he issued parsimonious replies to the five Democrats and two Republicans present," the *Washington Post* reported. "Dapper, white-haired and bearded, he resembled a slimmed-down Santa Claus in civilian dress more than Hollywood's version of a CIA consigliere." Rather than following Bush-style interrogation guidelines, the senators apparently assumed that groveling was the best means to get the truth.

The Supreme Court may show a bit more resolve, prompted perhaps by Abraham's affidavit. It had ruled in early April that it would not hear an expedited challenge to the MCA, but on June 29, the Court reversed itself and announced that it would hear two cases

challenging the new law. Its decision was the first time in 60 years that the Court had reversed itself on granting a hearing to a case.

The MCA cases could provide a far brighter official spotlight on torture than ever before. Aziz Huq of the NYU Law School observes that the case will likely reveal how Gitmo hearings "relied on evidence gained by torture and abuse and how few safeguards they have against error."

Bush torture policies were made in darkness by people who assumed that they would forever remain secret. As evidence leaked out, much of the world has been revolted at the U.S. government's barbarism, but most Americans remain oblivious. The Supreme Court case could change that overnight. If the MCA is struck down, the get-out-of-jail-free card that the White House and Congress provided to torturers and their enablers will be null. And the Supreme Court cannot endorse the use of tortured confessions without destroying its own credibility.

The Bush administration was able to punish Taguba, muzzle Hicks, intimidate Congress, and browbeat much of the media, but its luck may have run out. The president's approval ratings were his body armor against the torture revelations, but he is losing his immunity to criticism at the same time that CIA and military interrogators fear losing the *de facto* legal protection the president provided them since 2001. With each court or congressional battle, the administration is forced to embrace new absurdities or issue more falsehoods, and the number of people who could save their skins or their honor by telling the truth may now outnumber the diehard defenders of absolute executive power. ■

James Bovard is the author of Attention Deficit Democracy and eight other books.

Arts & Letters

FILM

[Sicko]

Faux Populist Goes to Doctor

By Steve Sailer

MICHAEL MOORE'S comic polemical documentaries have done more for his net worth than for his political causes. He attacked greedy CEOs sending American factory jobs abroad in 1989's "Roger & Me," gun sales in 2002's "Bowling for Columbine," and President Bush's war in Iraq in 2004's "Fahrenheit 9/11," leaving him 0-for-3.

In "Sicko," he has his ripest target yet, America's ramshackle healthcare finance system. Having come down with lymphatic cancer in 1996, I am sympathetic to Moore's bias against for-profit health insurance. I may still be here only because I had the kind of generous insurance that few employers provide these days.

Moore's centerpiece example is a young man battling cancer (at the same age as me) whose request for an expensive bone-marrow transplant was denied. He died three weeks later. Moore blames his death on insurance company greed, although that brief interval suggests his condition was hopeless. If I'd needed a bone-marrow transplant, I'd have wanted the law to align incentives by requiring my employer to buy both my health and life insurance from the same firm. The insurer would then have had to choose between paying my clinic and paying my widow.

Strangely, "Sicko" misses much of our expensive but stressful system's black comedy, such as medical providers mailing out heart-attack inducing bills demanding we pay their zany list prices, apparently in the hope that an occasional senile patient might dutifully ante up rather than forwarding it to his insurer. For instance, after a two-night hospital stay costing \$2,000 according to the rate my insurance company had already negotiated, the hospital billed me for \$34,000.

Unfortunately, Moore's self-promotion, disingenuousness, and leftist ideology make his event movies more about Moore than about their ostensible subjects. "Sicko's" underlying goal appears to be to use our absurd health-payment system to persuade us that socialism in general is superior to capitalism, that innately evil tumor on humanity. That's not a debate he's going to win, so he's distracting from the reality that medical insurance is a big exception to the rule that the profit motive works best.

Moreover, Moore's faux populism gives him an excuse to dumb down "Sicko" and not bother to explain why the competitive enterprise system that's good at providing us with, say, life insurance is bad at medical insurance.

In truth, our dysfunctional tradition of employer-provided health insurance isn't a result of the free market. Instead, it emerged during World War II as companies slid past wage-price controls by offering free fringe benefits to attract workers. In other words, it began as corporate liberality evading government-mandated stinginess. Of course, you won't learn that from "Sicko."

The documentary's lack of economic sophistication could be tolerated if his audience really was as uneducated as Moore implies. Yet despite his trade-

mark obesity and bad clothes, Moore's blue-collar Joe shtick is just an act, as he showed in his gun-control movie "Bowling for Columbine." Moore's fans—urban white liberals—want gun control to disarm the minority criminals who threaten them, but they aren't going to admit that, so Moore concocted a fantasy for them about how dangerous those heavily armed rural rednecks are.

Similarly, Moore lovingly shows us in "Sicko" that the French upper middle class live more stylishly than we American slobs. And he seems most at home chatting with another pseudo-prole, the grand old man of English leftism, Tony Benn, who used to be Anthony Wedgwood Benn, the 2nd Viscount Stansgate.

When Moore ventures abroad to tell us about the wonder of the government-paid systems in Canada, Britain, France, and, yes, Cuba, his satirical eye deserts him as he descends into complete credulity: It's free! Unlimited care, free!

Sadly, nothing can be unlimited. When I had cancer, I made my insurance company pay for second, third, and fourth opinions. I hired an oncologist as my consultant to help me evaluate the clinical trials offered by three top lymphoma specialists. With his aid, I became the first patient with intermediate-grade non-Hodgkins lymphoma to be treated with a radical new monoclonal antibody that has since become a multi-billion dollar per year drug. I've been fine for the decade since.

Today, I suspect, few HMO's—or, contra Moore, governments—would pay for such a lavish (but effective) plan of attack.

Still, despite Moore's miscues, health insurance is the best domestic issue the Democrats possess. Why let them have it? ■

Rated PG-13 for brief strong language.

BOOKS

[*Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*, Bill McKibben, *Times Books*, 261 pages]

Price, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness

By Caleb Stegall

IN 1947, two titans of 20th-century economic theory, Ludwig von Mises and Wilhelm Röpke, met in Röpke's home of Geneva, Switzerland. During the war, the Genevan fathers coped with shortages by providing citizens with small garden allotments outside the city for growing vegetables. These citizen gardens became so popular with the people of Geneva that the practice was continued even after the war and the return to abundance. Röpke was particularly proud of these citizen farmers, and so he took Mises on a tour of the gardens. "A very inefficient way of producing food-stuffs!" Mises noted disapprovingly. "Perhaps so, but a very efficient way of producing human happiness" was Röpke's rejoinder.

Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future by Bill McKibben is essentially a book-length recapitulation and exploration of the Mises-Röpke exchange. McKibben's task is first to demonstrate the failure of established economic theory to provide an adequate and sustainable account of human well-being and second to develop an alternative paradigm that offers a more durable way forward. On the former count, *Deep Economy* must be considered a rousing success. On the latter, more difficult score, it is disappointing. McKibben provides valuable insight and important stories of resistance, but he would

have benefited from a more thoroughgoing appreciation of the insights of the communitarian Right.

Deep Economy begins with some simple questions: What does it mean to be rich? Is more necessarily better? Why aren't we happy? McKibben argues that while our preoccupation with utilitarian economics has produced unprecedented growth and material wealth, it has faltered when it comes to providing human happiness and satisfaction. For example, McKibben points out that the established measure of economic growth—the Gross National Product—incorporates perverse incentives for economic exchange such that the most productive (read "happy") citizen is "a cancer patient who totals his car on his way to meet with his divorce lawyer." Obviously, evaluating human welfare requires a more supple set of tools.

Far more alarming to McKibben, however, is that the "American way of life"—easy mobility, hyper-individualism, mass consumerism, and the commodification of all things at the altar of the market—has made our society dangerously unstable. "Peak oil" (the phenomena of global oil demand outpacing declining supplies) and global warming feature prominently in McKibben's argument. He likewise cites studies and

abundant growth and progress driven by a nearly insatiable appetite for the earth's accumulated stores of cheap fossil energy is nearing an end. It is clear that our political and economic elites are mostly in denial about what this means for our social order. It is clear, whether one buys McKibben's global-warming alarmism or not, that our sprawl mania is ecologically unsustainable, causing dangerous depletions of natural resources from top soil to water. It is clear that the financial sector is hopelessly overburdened with a legacy of cheap money (which means high debt) backed solely by the presence of cheap oil. It is clear that policy makers in Washington are intent on continuing to provide centralized subsidies to this stumbling behemoth thereby squelching the possible development of true alternatives. Finally, it is clear that as the billions of consumers in the developing world come online and begin to want and expect what we want and expect, the age-old law of scarcity will reassert itself with a vengeance.

Thus the age of "happy motoring"—as James Howard Kunstler has dubbed it—is all but over. McKibben is justifiably worried that the collapse of the postwar economy may bring down the tattered remnants of the social arrangements

WHILE OUR PREOCCUPATION WITH UTILITARIAN ECONOMICS HAS PRODUCED UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH AND MATERIAL WEALTH, IT HAS FALTERED WHEN IT COMES TO PROVIDING HUMAN HAPPINESS AND SATISFACTION.

anecdotes describing Americans' general sense of malaise and unease, the widening gap between the haves and have-nots, our obscenely high rate of incarceration, and so on—all despite the continued growth of GDP. This litany amounts to well-trodden ground, and McKibben ably covers it again.

For anyone paying attention, the suggestion that our current economic and social arrangements are like a rickety house just waiting for the roof to fall in is not a hard sell. It is clear that the era of

(not to mention the ecological foundation on which they were built) that stood for centuries. The totality of these complex arrangements are encapsulated for McKibben in the word "community," which is the real subject of his book. Much of *Deep Economy* is taken up with the stories of those who are trying to salvage the wealth of true communities before they completely slip from living memory.

It is at this point that McKibben's assets as a journalist become most valu-

able to his argument. His prose is lively and engaging, anecdotal rather than systematic. McKibben tells of his “year of eating locally” during which he attempted to obtain all his food from the valley in which he lives. In the course of this experiment, McKibben details the massive global food industry which produces, packages, and delivers virtually every bite to our lips across an average of 1,500 miles. Trying to eat locally was simply an “artificial attempt to persuade myself that some other view of ‘the economy’ was even remotely plausible, that in the absence of the industrial food system I wouldn’t starve.”

McKibben describes less artificial attempts as well. He introduces the reader to small farm experiments in Vermont and Cuba, both redolent of Röpke’s citizen gardens in Geneva. Burlington is home to the Intervale, a 200-acre stretch in an industrial area that at one time served as the city dump and is now leased in small plots to citizen farmers who share equipment, know-how, and good times. The Intervale provides 8 percent of all the fresh food consumed in Burlington. When

The upshot of these experiences demonstrates that “if all you are worried about is the greatest yield per acre, then *smaller farms produce more food*. ... You get more food per *acre* with small farms; more food per *dollar* with big ones.” Subservience to the economic prime directive of maximizing every dollar actually diminishes the quality and potential quantity of our food supply—not even mentioning the cultural, communal, and political goods that attend production on small farms. As one Intervale farmer, who also happens to be the chairman of Vermont’s House Agriculture Committee, said, “There’s an incredible resurgence of people in a directionless society suddenly wanting to find their roots. There’s real satisfaction in producing your own food.” Or put more succinctly by one newly minted Cuban farmer: “[Before], I was fat, a functionary. I was a bureaucrat.”

McKibben describes similar stories of plausible alternative economies in a dizzying array of sectors and places around the world: from rabbit farmers in China to a community-owned general

happy.” Or perhaps more honestly: “I rather enjoy being unhappy in my sprawl, my weekend getaway, my three car garage, and all of the accoutrements of lumpenleisure” (another Kunstlerism). Here *Deep Economy* would have benefited from the more compelling argument, articulated by communitarians of the Right (from Tocqueville to Robert Nisbet) that hyperutilitarianism makes citizens less free.

As Tocqueville argued, a benevolent yet centralized power will “cover the surface of society with a network of small, complicated rules, minute and uniform” until man’s will “is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided.” By this process, society “is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals of which the government is the shepherd” of an “innumerable multitude of men, all equal and alike, incessantly endeavoring to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives.” This form of total control is “combined more easily than is commonly believed” with “outward forms of freedom” and can even be established under the “sovereignty of the people.”

Absent this insight, McKibben is left with the far weaker argument that hyper-individualism simply makes us unhappy. “We need, in short, a new utilitarianism,” announces McKibben—a utilitarianism to measure human happiness. To that end, he turns to economist Richard Layard who writes, “We now know that what people say about how they feel corresponds closely to the actual levels of activity in different parts of the brain, which can be measured in standard scientific ways.” McKibben concludes that the “idea that there is a state called happiness, and that we can dependably figure out what it feels like and how to measure it, is extremely subversive. It would allow economists to ... stop asking ‘What did you buy?’ and to start asking ‘Is your life good?’” To the contrary, claims granting vast new powers to elite experts do not strike me as subversive in any good way. It is at this point that I wish McKibben would have recalled the far more subversive and anarchical wisdom of Wendell

BURLINGTON IS HOME TO THE INTERVALE, A 200-ACRE STRETCH IN AN INDUSTRIAL AREA THAT AT ONE TIME SERVED AS THE CITY DUMP AND IS NOW LEASED IN SMALL PLOTS TO CITIZEN FARMERS WHO SHARE EQUIPMENT, KNOW-HOW, AND GOOD TIMES.

Cuba faced global isolation following the collapse of the Soviet Union, its system of food production had to change radically. “What happened,” writes McKibben, “was simple, if unexpected. Cuba learned to stop exporting sugar and instead started raising its own food again, growing it on small private farms and in thousands of pocket-sized urban market gardens.” Moreover, “in so doing, Cubans have created what may be the world’s largest working model of a semisustainable agriculture, one that relies far less than the rest of the world does on oil, on chemicals, on shipping vast quantities of food back and forth.”

store in Wyoming to locally produced radio entertainment to creative mass public transportation in Brazil to peasant farms in Bangladesh. For McKibben, the lesson in all of these stories is that we remain capable, if pushed, of defending and developing what he dubs the durable “economics of neighborliness.”

For all of these virtues, *Deep Economy* falls short of its more ambitious goal of laying a theoretical framework for thinking about human happiness, community, and, well being. To the simple question, “Why aren’t we happy?” McKibben offers no compelling reply to the obvious rejoinder from most Americans: “Speak for yourself, I am quite

Berry (to whom *Deep Economy* is dedicated) who wrote, "As soon as the generals and the politicians / can predict the motions of your mind, / lose it. Leave it as a sign / to mark the false trail, the way you didn't go." Instead, McKibben's only recourse is to the stale status-quo of social-science data purporting to assign "happiness scores" to various socio-economic groupings.

Again, the question of community is not a question of happy feelings but one of social power, as Robert Nisbet so forcefully argued. This truth is illustrated clearly by a group of villagers McKibben visited in Bangladesh. An international expert was selling genetically enhanced grain, allegedly to resolve vitamin deficiencies in local diets. McKibben notes that rather than object on the more decadent, happiness-oriented, Western grounds that genetically modified food is "icky" and "not organic," the Bengali wisely understood that the true stakes were much higher. They "instantly realized that the new rice would require fertilizer and pesticide, meaning both illness and debt." In fact, they recognized rather easily what we Americans seem so slow to grasp—that giving up access and control over their own food supply meant giving up real power over their own lives.

The primary characteristic of the disease McKibben describes so well is only hinted at in *Deep Economy*, but never adequately named. That characteristic is not too much freedom but rather the loss of the freedom of communities to exercise real social power and authority due to oppressive and totalitarian systems of centralized political and economic control by bureaucrats, experts, and functionaries. To start a recovery project with a "new utilitarianism" of "happiness scores" is to fit the wolves with tailor-made wool. Lord spare us both the blowhards from the Department of Commerce and the busybodies from the Ministry of Happiness! ■

Caleb Stegall practices law in Kerry, Kansas and is at work on a book on prairie populism.

[*The Atomic Bazaar: The Rise of the Nuclear Poor*, William Langewiesche, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 192 pages]

How I Learned to Stop Worrying...

By Justin Logan

IN 1963, President John F. Kennedy described his alarm over one possible course of world politics. "I am haunted," Kennedy admitted, "by the feeling that by 1970, unless we are successful, there may be 10 nuclear powers instead of four, and by 1975, 15 or 20."

To the relief of many, Kennedy was overly pessimistic. By 1970, only China had joined the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France as the fifth member of the nuclear club, and by 1975, there were only six nuclear states, India having tested in 1974. Even today the nuclear club has only nine members. Still, nuclear technology is more than 60 years old, and its proliferation is governed by an agreement that will turn 40 next year. It is unlikely that the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty will constrain the spread of nuclear weapons indefinitely, and with North Korea having attained nuclear status and Iran apparently trying determinedly to do the same, the stresses on the NPT are severe and growing.

The accepted view on all of this is that the NPT will hold because it must. The uncertain world that lies beyond its reach is so frightening to many, including much of the arms-control community, that we dare not countenance it.

Not so for William Langewiesche. In his new book, *The Atomic Bazaar: The Rise of the Nuclear Poor*, Langewiesche concludes starkly, "Diplomacy may help to slow the spread [of nuclear weapons], but it can no more stop the process than it can reverse the progression of time. The nuclearization of the world has become the human condition, and it cannot be changed."

This revelation comes early on, and it sums up the sense of fatalism that

pervades the book. Langewiesche opens with an icy discussion of the American use of nuclear weapons against civilian populations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, followed by a similarly antiseptic description of the physics of nuclear weapons. A national correspondent for *The Atlantic Monthly*, Langewiesche is a skillful writer, and both treatments induce awe and queasiness, reflecting our deep ambivalence about our nation's relationship with nuclear technology. Langewiesche cannot resist pointing out that by any fair definition of the word "terrorism," the American attacks on Hiroshima—and certainly on Nagasaki—constituted the gravest acts of terrorism the world has ever seen.

This discussion sets up an explanation of how revulsion over Hiroshima led the founding fathers of the nuclear bomb to create the Federation of American Scientists, a group that to this day attempts to educate policymakers and the American public on the implications and dangers of nuclear weapons. The book also offers a brief explanation of the logic of the NPT—it was intended not to constrain, let alone reduce, the number of nuclear weapons in the world but rather to limit membership in the club of nuclear nations—before moving swiftly on to Langewiesche's bread and butter, investigative reporting.

He frames this section by putting the reader in the position of the head of a non-state group attempting to acquire nuclear weapons for first-use against the United States. Recounting the many obstacles to achieving this goal, Langewiesche takes readers on a tour of the southern Caucasus, Kurdistan, and other locales in which he has investigated the nuclear trade. Langewiesche has a deep-seated cynicism about the U.S. government's efforts to constrain the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and he highlights numerous instances of American fecklessness and lack of seriousness.

One particularly galling example is the case of the formerly closed Russian town of Ozersk, a place that now houses tons of highly enriched uranium and plutonium in shakily secured facilities. The Russians—paranoid but not without real

enemies—only reluctantly agreed to cooperate with the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration in enhancing their security measures in Ozersk. But as Langewiesche observes, the Russians are “concerned less about thieves or terrorists than about American spies.” In 2004, the Russians turned skittish when an NGO called “Planet of Hopes” began investigating ecological and social problems around Ozersk. Russian authorities responded by lashing out against the group and accusing it of having been funded by the CIA, a charge that was disproved only once it was revealed that the National Endowment for Democracy was financing the group’s investigations.

The episode is but one example of how Washington’s policies abroad jeopardize American national security. A rational foreign policy would recognize that quietly funding groups to investigate the Russian government could cause already suspicious Moscow to close off further, endangering more important American objectives such as improving security at Russian nuclear facilities. But urged on by men like Sen. John McCain, the National Endowment for Democracy and other democracy-promotion vehicles continue to foster suspicion of those who are responsible for important American security initiatives abroad.

Langewiesche’s investigation leads him to conclude, “regions beyond government control are rarely as chaotic as they seem to be to Western officials.” The implication of this is that “Western agencies that could find a way to lay traplines in [these areas] would have a better chance of stopping a terrorist attack than any port-inspection program, bureaucratic reshuffling, or military maneuvering can provide,” but he finds scarce evidence that American policymakers have interest in such initiatives.

One of the most neglected topics in the post-9/11 world—and of discussions of weapons of mass destruction—is risk assessment. Langewiesche has a derisive view of our tendency to respond with panic to dangers that, as John Mueller has pointed out in his book *Overblown*, are less than the risk of drowning in a bathtub

or dying from anaphylactic shock after being stung by bees. Langewiesche notes that the actual threat posed by “dirty bombs” is largely chimerical and that they “would be mere nuisance bombs if people would keep their calm. But of course people will not.” Such rationality is unrealistic “in societies where even outdoor tobacco smoke is called a threat.”

Though it is beyond the purview of *The Atomic Bazaar*, this line of thinking points to the absurdity of the idea that a people that cowers in fear of any variety of bogeymen from Hugo Chavez to trans-fats should set out to transform the Islamic world at gunpoint. Sniffers and HDL-watchers make bad imperialists, and the American populace at large seems bent on withdrawing into a cocoon of effete worry-mongering. Although this backdrop of risk aversion makes irrational policy lash-outs more likely, it simultaneously makes the public unwilling to sustain the very high costs of such policies over the longer term.

Langewiesche concludes the book with a short history of the proliferation network led by Abdul Qadeer Khan, the father of the Pakistani atomic bomb and the most successful proliferator of the nuclear age. His investigation in Pakistan leaves Langewiesche oozing with contempt for the country, a “morally bankrupt and corrupt nation, where cowardly and illegitimate rulers, propped up by massive infusions of American dollars and dependent on their soldiers’ guns, suppress genuine inquiries because they would be implicated themselves and, in the embarrassment that would follow, would be cut off from foreign aid, and driven from power by their own people, who almost universally now detest them.” Those with a particular interest in the Khan network will find a much deeper and more thorough treatment of the topic in Gordon Corera’s *Shopping for Bombs*, but Langewiesche covers the basics.

After informing readers up front that proliferation is inevitable and then cataloging the ineptitude of the American government’s efforts to stop proliferation, what is Langewiesche’s conclusion? Is the world destined for destruction, a

future in which proliferation leads to nuclear holocaust? Langewiesche’s fatalism is somewhat softened by his claim that “the spread of nuclear weapons, even to such countries as North Korea and Iran, may not be as catastrophic as is generally believed and certainly does not meet the category of threat that can justify the suppression of civil liberties or the pursuit of preemptive wars.”

But perhaps the most salient observation of *The Atomic Bazaar* is that of a Pakistani analyst whom Langewiesche quotes at length:

You cannot have a world order in which you have five or eight nuclear-weapons states on the one hand, and the rest of the international community on the other. There are many places ... which have legitimate security concerns—every bit as legitimate as yours. And yet you ask them to address those concerns without nuclear weapons, while you have nuclear weapons *and* you have everything else? It is not a question of what is fair, or right or wrong. It is simply not going to work.

Nuclear American exceptionalism is not a sustainable approach to the question of nuclear proliferation.

Perhaps the best we can do is take our shots as they come, placing obstacles in front of would-be proliferators to make their jobs more difficult. All is not lost on this front; an aspiring A.Q. Khan starting out today would have a much tougher time than Khan did while getting his start in the 1970s. But one huge step the U.S. government could take would be to work to reduce or eliminate the “legitimate security concerns” for countries such as Iran that are examining nuclear weapons as a defense strategy. Whether a course correction on this front would now come too late to affect the spread of nuclear weapons remains to be seen, but it would be folly to continue blindly on our current path and refuse, at the very least, to try. ■

Justin Logan is a foreign-policy analyst at the CATO Institute.

[*The Cult of the Amateur: How Today's Internet is Killing Our Culture*, Andrew Keen, Currency, 240 pages]

Bloggers at the Gates

By Clark Stooksbury

ALMOST OVERNIGHT, the World Wide Web has been transformed, as millions of people have become not just consumers and viewers but participants. This phenomenon, called "Web 2.0" in the peculiar argot of the computer nerd, is exemplified by sites such as YouTube, where anyone can post videos, and MySpace, a social-networking site that allows millions to post pictures, video, and diaries.

Andrew Keen's jeremiad against the rise of Web 2.0, *The Cult of the Amateur: How Today's Internet is Killing Our Culture*, makes some valid arguments, but his few nuggets of wisdom get lost in an avalanche of overheated rhetoric. Keen, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, is worried that the burgeoning online do-it-yourself culture is killing off the top-down model of professional news gathering, the artistic creations of professional musicians and writers, and the criticism and direction of cultural mandarins.

Should Keen's nightmare vision actually materialize—a world in which blogs replace newspapers and TV news and all entertainment is reduced to the work of teenagers with digital camcorders—I will happily join him on the barricades in defense of the professionals against the "noble amateurs" he denounces. Fortunately, we are not at that juncture, and Keen doesn't make a convincing case that we will be in the near future.

When his concerns are legitimate, Keen often ignores the extent to which these problems predate the growth of the Web. He laments at length the decline of newspapers, but they have been losing circulation and downsizing for decades due to competition from

radio and television. The *Washington Star* and the *New York Herald Tribune*—not to mention the *New York Herald* and the *New York Tribune*—didn't die by blog. The gravest threats facing print media today are not just blogs but sites like Craigslist.org, which offer free online classifieds and thus cost newspapers revenue even when they don't lose subscribers.

The barriers-to-entry to the blogosphere are virtually nonexistent. One can set up a free blog (as I did) in just a few minutes. This promotes new talent, but it also gives voice to an endless array of witless cranks. Some bloggers, such as Hugh Hewitt, think of the blogosphere as a replacement for the news media, but sensible people don't.

Keen flails wildly when he accuses bloggers on the scene during Hurricane Katrina of inflating the body count and making erroneous reports of activities at the Superdome. He doesn't cite specific examples, and it is hard to credit his version of events, since New Orleans was without power and bloggers would have had great difficulties filing firsthand reports. In those early days after New Orleans was flooded, elements of the mainstream media were all too often the ones responsible for spreading wild rumors.

He also makes the occasional howler in defense of the "old media," such as when he states that in "professionally edited newspapers and magazines ... political slant ... is restricted to the op-ed page," but "the majority of blogs make radical, sweeping statements without evidence or substantiation." At the very least, he should acknowledge that the neutrality of newspapers and magazines is a hotly debated topic. Ironically, the second claim is a radical, sweeping statement made without evidence or substantiation.

One doesn't learn from Keen that numerous blogs are maintained by professional journalists such as Matthew Yglesias and Andrew Sullivan, both of *The Atlantic Monthly*. He cites polling data indicating that 34 percent of bloggers consider themselves journalists.

That seems a bit high, but the far more significant statistic would be the number of readers who consider blogs their primary source for news. The most ambitious attempt at blog journalism to date is PajamasMedia.com. It is unfortunate that Keen only briefly mentions this site because it cries out for more attention. It launched in late 2005, under the leadership of mystery writer/blogger Roger L. Simon, as a blog alternative to the old-guard media. As an actual news site, it isn't very good. Taken for what it is—a collection of neocon blogs and links—it is, however, useful.

The blog threat to journalism isn't the only concern that animates Andrew Keen. It seems that every type of cultural authority is under attack from Web 2.0. Part of his problem is that he has spent too much time in the company of techno-utopians and has given their wild predictions excessive credence. He frets at length over the ravings of Kevin Kelly, a founder of *Wired* magazine who wants to "digitaliz[e] all books into a single universal, open-source, and free hypertext."

In a May 2006 *New York Times Magazine* 'manifesto,' Kelly describes this as the 'liquid version' of the book, a universal library in which 'each book is cross-linked, clustered, cited, extracted, indexed, analyzed, annotated, remixed, reassembled, and woven deeper into the culture than ever before.' And Kelly couldn't care less whether the contributor to this hypertextual utopia is Dostoyevsky or one of the seven Dwarfs.

What horrifies Keen merely bores me. Even if Kelly achieves his dream and groovy "liquid books" come into existence, the rest of us can still have real books—bound clumps of paper in a form that Gutenberg would still recognize. Dostoevsky will still be read and remembered when Kevin Kelly is long forgotten.

Keen's book is elitist in the superficial sense of the word as he takes the side of professionals against amateurs. The elitism doesn't go much beyond that, since

he exalts professionalism, not excellence. He makes no distinction between Dostoevsky and Dr. Phil, so long as both are professionally published.

The most peculiar appeal to authority in *Amateur* is directed toward a dying, actually dead, breed: the encyclopedic Tower Records clerk. Keen laments the death of the music chain and argues that online retailers will never match the “deeply knowledgeable Tower clerk” as a “cultural tastemaker.” While such a sentiment is easy to mock, Keen has a point about the loss of broad and deeply stocked retailers such as Tower. But he only briefly mentions the self-inflicted wounds killing the old-line music industry—the antiquated and excessive price structure for CDs.

Keen’s epiphany on the evils of Web 2.0 came at a retreat organized by Tim O’Reilly of the tech publisher O’Reilly Media. At this “FOO (friends of O’Reilly) Camp,” consisting of “graying hippies, new media entrepreneurs and technology geeks” in northern California in 2004, Keen reports that the only rule was that everyone had to participate, not just watch. “Everyone was simultaneously broadcasting themselves, but nobody was listening. Out of this anarchy, it suddenly became clear that what was governing the infinite monkeys now inputting

away on the Internet was the law of digital Darwinism, the survival of the loudest and most opinionated. Under these rules, the only way to intellectually prevail is by infinite filibustering.” Not exactly an inspiring vision.

Keen tells of how he came to “FOO Camp to imagine the future of media. I wanted to know how the Internet could help me ‘bring more music to more orifices.’ But ... the promise of using technology to bring more culture to the masses had been drowned out by FOO Camper’s collective cry for a democratized media. The new Internet was about self-made music, not Bob Dylan or the Brandenburg Concertos.” That last, astonishing sentence captures Keen’s mood perfectly. He is palpably horrified that people might make music for themselves. He defends Dylan against the onslaught of amateurs, but had he run into him back in Hibbing, Minnesota or in Greenwich Village in the early 1960s, Keen would have instructed the uncredentialed amateur to stop writing those nonsensical ditties and consult a knowledgeable Tower Records clerk to help purchase music made by professionals.

The Cult of the Amateur raises some valid issues, although it is at times difficult to see how some of them—such as identity theft and digital piracy—

directly relate to the do-it-yourself culture of blogs and Wikipedia. Keen also has a point about how “bloggers today are forming aggregated communities of like-minded amateur journalists”—at websites like Townhall.com and Pajamasmedia.com—“where they congregate in self-congratulatory clusters.”

Keen only briefly considers one of the blogosphere’s most powerful members—Glenn Reynolds of Instapundit. Reynolds essentially came out of nowhere in the aftermath of 9/11 and evolved into a reliable supporter of the Iraq War and the Republican Party. At his best, he offers a frequently updated source of information; at his worst, he uncritically parrots crackpots and their “stabbed in the back” style rhetoric against war opponents in order to shift the blame for the disastrous war. Keen calls Reynolds a “techno utopian” and gives his alternative view: “we need rules and regulations to help control our behavior online.” He doesn’t elaborate as to how this would relate to the blogosphere, but the implication is that news and opinion sites on the Web should be licensed and regulated.

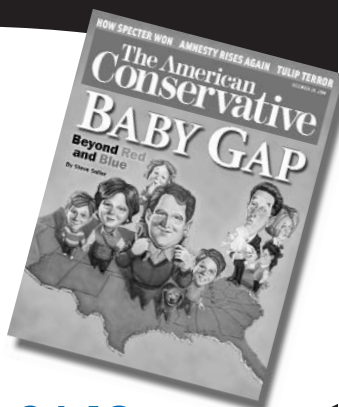
Few people actually want to live in the techno-culture Keen fears, where all news comes from bloggers with laptops and cellphone cameras, where literary fiction is replaced by homemade hypertext novels in which you get to decide how the story ends. But it seems that Keen has gone camping with every single one of them and has uncritically bought into their triumphal hype. I don’t want to live in that world any more than he does, but neither would I return to the world that Keen pines for where a sonorous newsreader like Walter Cronkite is a “universally admired, trusted and respected” cultural hero and everyone else shuts up and listens. The experts and professionals can still maintain their slightly less dominant voice even if amateurs join in the conversation. ■

Clark Stooksbury writes from Knoxville, Tennessee and blogs at clarkstooksbury.blogspot.com.

Subscribe to The American Conservative Today.

Simply go to
www.amconmag.com
and click “Subscribe”
or call

1-800-579-6148



Jocotepec Jitterbug

My stepdaughter Natalia, 15, graduated last week from Antonia Palomares school in Jocotepec, on the north shore of Lake Chapala, in Jalisco, Mexico, where I live.

Inevitably the parents held a monster fiesta. Mexicans seem to have a genetic predisposition toward fiestas, having one at any provocation. The hall they rented was just a very large room with tables and a bandstand but space to dance. That's what counts hereabouts.

My wife Violeta and I showed up with Natalia, a bottle of tequila, mixers, and suchlike paraphernalia of gaiety, and greeted friends at our table. Things got rolling after 10. The lights went down and the band cranked up and lit into an hour and a half of nonstop cumbias, salsa, and banda. Conversation was impossible, but you don't come to a fiesta to talk. You can do that anywhere. You come to dance, which everyone proceeded to do.

Mexicans approach dancing a bit differently than Americans. A couple of large circles coalesced on the floor, everyone moving to the music. One after another, a dancer would go to the center of the circle to strut his (or, most assuredly, her) stuff and retire to the circumference to applause.

When Vi and I reached the line, a mob of teenage girls pushed us into the center. Resistance was futile. The young ladies had a sample gringo and meant to make the most of it. At these things, I usually constitute the entire Nordic presence, there being little real contact between Americans and locals. We lit into a fast double-step jitterbug to everyone's satisfaction.

The horns squonked and blared and the rhythm pounded, and when anyone especially good was in the center, everyone clapped to the beat and hollered

"Hey! Hey! Hey!" I found myself thinking, "This really, truly isn't Kansas, Dorothy." Americans don't quite know what's down here. We think of Pedro and his burro sleeping under the cactus or illegals tunneling under the border.

Well, yes, sort of, but no, not at all. There's an actual country here, a hundred million souls, Latin to the marrow, and below a whole Latin world stretching to Tierra del Fuego. The poor in Mexico try to go to the U.S. because that's where the money is. The rest aren't interested. They're Mexican, and they like that just fine, thank you. Though they seldom say it, being considerate, we seem cold and isolated to them.

Vi and I took a break for tequila and Squirt—that, not the margarita, is the Mexican national drink. I watched Nata's classmates, their big sisters, their moms, and thought how endlessly

CONVERSATION WAS IMPOSSIBLE, BUT **YOU DON'T COME TO A FIESTA TO TALK.**

pretty Mexican women are, how naturally they dance. (A friend of mine insists that Protestants can't dance because they don't have hips. He swears it's in *Gray's Anatomy*.)

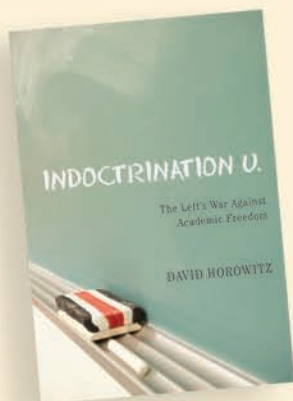
The almost universal response of unmarried American men to the circumambient femininity is, "Hoo-ah! What everlovin' honeys!" The appreciation is only partly of physical prettiness. In the U.S. this would be regarded as sexist. In Mexico, culturally committed to a policy of sexual dimorphism, it is a compliment and a truism.

These girls are not going to lead their parents' lives. Mexico is changing, fast. The birth rate falls like a rock. It is not uncommon for a woman in her late 30s to have eight or ten brothers and sisters but only two kids of her own. Machismo, if not dead, looks to have a sliderule's future in Palo Alto. Many of Nata's classmates plan on university. Female dentists and lawyers are common.

Carrie Nation would find the going rough here. Natalia, lovely in a black dress, chattered with friends during a break and drank a tequila and Squirt. I think it's illegal, but Mexicans tend to ignore laws when they make no sense, and the occasional drink is held not to damage those verging on adulthood.

Parenthetically, I might add that the northern notion of the submissive Mexicana is overdrawn. They aren't coiled to strike, but submissive, no. For example Natalia, when seriously crossed, exhibits a fawnlike timidity that I associate with the Wehrmacht in Poland. She has teeth. She isn't looking for a chance to use them. Mexico is less edgy than America.

Mexicans have their own ideas about what I suppose might be called age-appropriateness. Early in the evening a woman walked across the floor leading a little girl, who looked to have learned to walk last week. She will grow up thinking that fiestas and dancing are reasonable. Several boys of maybe 10 ran around and occasionally joined the circle. Mothers danced with their kids, a thing unimaginable in my high-school years. People here regard it as normal. If you asked them about it, they would look puzzled and say, "Why not?" ■



INDOCTRINATION U.

By David Horowitz | ISBN: 978-1-59403-190-8 | \$21.95

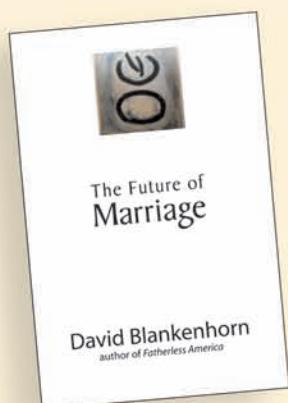
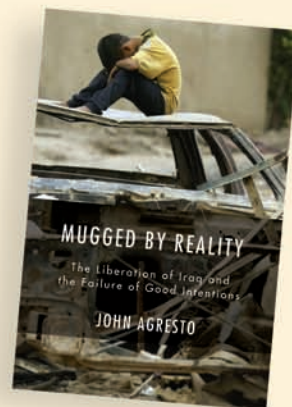
In 2003, Horowitz began a campaign to promote intellectual diversity in American universities. He devised an "Academic Bill of Rights" and launched a national student movement on 160 campuses, promoting student-specific academic freedoms. In this book, Horowitz unveils the intellectual corruption of faculty activists who have turned classrooms into political platforms, with little regard for professional standards. *Indoctrination U.* also offers a riveting account of the reaction by professor unions under leadership of the political left. This is the story of the battle against academic freedom; it can also be read as a case study of the politics of the radical left.

MUGGED BY REALITY

THE LIBERATION OF IRAQ AND THE FAILURE OF GOOD INTENTIONS

by John Agresto | ISBN: 978-1-594031-87-8 | \$25.95

John Agresto spent a little over nine months in Iraq. His job was to help Iraq rebuild its once highly regarded education system. As he left Iraq, Agresto was asked by the Pentagon to write a few paragraphs for the future about this formative and transitional time; from those paragraphs *Mugged by Reality* was born.



THE FUTURE OF MARRIAGE

by David Blankenhorn | ISBN: 978-1-594030-81-9 | \$25.95

In the current demands of various organizations, Blankenhorn points out, gay and lesbian leaders are not asking for marriage with the adjective "gay" in front of it, but marriage itself. So in that sense, what marriage is and why it matters are ultimately what this debate about the future of marriage is all about. David Blankenhorn answers the 'whats' and the 'whys' of our most important—and troubled—social institution.

BLOWING UP RUSSIA

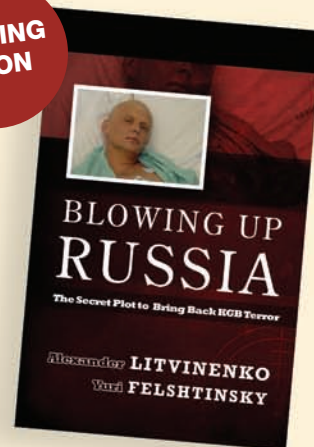
THE SECRET PLOT TO BRING BACK KGB TERROR

by Alexander Litvinenko and Yuri Feltshinsky

ISBN: 978-1-594032-01-1 | \$25.95

Major breaking news in the US just months ago, *Blowing Up Russia* uncovers the truths behind the successful plot to assassinate Alexander Litvinenko. Unlike the other books coming out about this hot news story, this one was written by the deceased and has unprecedented insider material that other books will lack. Yuri Feltshinsky is the author of several books on Russia and was one of the last people to speak to Litvinenko before the latter succumbed to radioactive poisoning.

COMING
SOON



ENCOUNTER BOOKS www.encounterbooks.com

At bookstores everywhere or call 800-786-3839